

COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS FOR THE THERAPY
AND DIAGNOSIS OF BREAST CANCER

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No.
5 09/577,505, filed May 24, 2000, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application
No. 09/534,825, filed March 22, 2000, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent
Application No. 09/429,755, filed October 28, 1999, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S.
Patent Application No. 09/289,198, filed April 9, 1999, which is a continuation-in-part of
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/062,451, filed April 17, 1998, which is a continuation in
10 part of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/991,789, filed December 11, 1997, which is a
continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/838,762, filed April 9, 1997, which
claims priority from International Patent Application No. PCT/US97/00485, filed January
10, 1997, and is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/700,014, filed
August 20, 1996, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application No.
15 08/585,392, filed January 11, 1996, now abandoned.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to therapy and diagnosis of cancer,
such as breast cancer. The invention is more specifically related to polypeptides
comprising at least a portion of a breast tumor protein, and to polynucleotides encoding
20 such polypeptides. Such polypeptides and polynucleotides may be used in compositions
for prevention and treatment of breast cancer, and for the diagnosis and monitoring of such
cancers.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Breast cancer is a significant health problem for women in the United States
25 and throughout the world. Although advances have been made in detection and treatment
of the disease, breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in

women, affecting more than 180,000 women in the United States each year. For women in North America, the life-time odds of getting breast cancer are now one in eight.

No vaccine or other universally successful method for the prevention or treatment of breast cancer is currently available. Management of the disease currently
5 relies on a combination of early diagnosis (through routine breast screening procedures) and aggressive treatment, which may include one or more of a variety of treatments such as surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy and hormone therapy. The course of treatment for a particular breast cancer is often selected based on a variety of prognostic parameters, including an analysis of specific tumor markers. See, e.g., Porter-Jordan and Lippman,
10 *Breast Cancer* 8:73-100 (1994). However, the use of established markers often leads to a result that is difficult to interpret, and the high mortality observed in breast cancer patients indicates that improvements are needed in the treatment, diagnosis and prevention of the disease.

Accordingly, there is a need in the art for improved methods for therapy and
15 diagnosis of breast cancer. The present invention fulfills these needs and further provides other related advantages.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly stated, the present invention provides compositions and methods for the diagnosis and therapy of cancer, such as breast cancer. In one aspect, the present
20 invention provides polypeptides comprising at least a portion of a breast tumor protein, or a variant thereof. Certain portions and other variants are immunogenic, such that the ability of the variant to react with antigen-specific antisera is not substantially diminished. Within certain embodiments, the polypeptide comprises a sequence that is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of: (a) sequences recited in
25 SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317; (b) variants of a sequence recited in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317; and (c) complements of a sequence of (a) or (b). In specific embodiments, the polypeptides of the present invention comprise at least a portion of a tumor protein that includes an

amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of sequences recited in SEQ ID NO: 299, 300, 304-306, 308-312 and 314, and variants thereof.

The present invention further provides polynucleotides that encode a polypeptide as described above, or a portion thereof (such as a portion encoding at least 15 amino acid residues of a breast tumor protein), expression vectors comprising such polynucleotides and host cells transformed or transfected with such expression vectors.

Within other aspects, the present invention provides pharmaceutical compositions comprising a polypeptide or polynucleotide as described above and a physiologically acceptable carrier.

Within a related aspect of the present invention, immunogenic compositions, or vaccines for prophylactic or therapeutic use are provided. Such compositions comprise a polypeptide or polynucleotide as described above and an immunostimulant.

The present invention further provides pharmaceutical compositions that comprise: (a) an antibody or antigen-binding fragment thereof that specifically binds to a breast tumor protein; and (b) a physiologically acceptable carrier.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides pharmaceutical compositions comprising: (a) an antigen presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide as described above and (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or excipient. Antigen presenting cells include dendritic cells, macrophages, monocytes, fibroblasts and B cells.

Within related aspects, immunogenic compositions, or vaccines, are provided that comprise: (a) an antigen presenting cell that expresses a polypeptide as described above and (b) an immunostimulant.

The present invention further provides, in other aspects, fusion proteins that comprise at least one polypeptide as described above, as well as polynucleotides encoding such fusion proteins.

Within related aspects, pharmaceutical compositions comprising a fusion protein, or a polynucleotide encoding a fusion protein, in combination with a physiologically acceptable carrier are provided.

Compositions are further provided, within other aspects, that comprise a fusion protein, or a polynucleotide encoding a fusion protein, in combination with an immunostimulant.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for inhibiting
 5 the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient a composition as recited above. The patient may be afflicted with breast cancer, in which case the methods provide treatment for the disease, or patient considered at risk for such a disease may be treated prophylactically.

The present invention further provides, within other aspects, methods for
 10 removing tumor cells from a biological sample, comprising contacting a biological sample with T cells that specifically react with a breast tumor protein, wherein the step of contacting is performed under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the removal of cells expressing the protein from the sample.

Within related aspects, methods are provided for inhibiting the development
 15 of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient a biological sample treated as described above.

Methods are further provided, within other aspects, for stimulating and/or
 expanding T cells specific for a breast tumor protein, comprising contacting T cells with one or more of: (i) a polypeptide as described above; (ii) a polynucleotide encoding such a
 20 polypeptide; and/or (iii) an antigen presenting cell that expresses such a polypeptide; under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the stimulation and/or expansion of T cells. Isolated T cell populations comprising T cells prepared as described above are also provided.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for inhibiting
 25 the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising administering to a patient an effective amount of a T cell population as described above.

The present invention further provides methods for inhibiting the development of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) incubating CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient with one or more of: (i) a polypeptide comprising at

least an immunogenic portion of a breast tumor protein; (ii) a polynucleotide encoding such a polypeptide; and (iii) an antigen-presenting cell that expressed such a polypeptide; and (b) administering to the patient an effective amount of the proliferated T cells, and thereby inhibiting the development of a cancer in the patient. Proliferated cells may, but need not, be cloned prior to administration to the patient.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides methods for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with a binding agent that binds to a polypeptide as recited above; (b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; and (c) comparing the amount of polypeptide with a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient. Within preferred embodiments, the binding agent is an antibody, more preferably a monoclonal antibody. The cancer may be breast cancer.

The present invention also provides, within other aspects, methods for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient. Such methods comprise the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient at a first point in time with a binding agent that binds to a polypeptide as recited above; (b) detecting in the sample an amount of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and (d) comparing the amount of polypeptide detected in step (c) with the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

The present invention further provides, within other aspects, methods for determining the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a breast tumor protein; (b) detecting in the sample a level of a polynucleotide, preferably mRNA, that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide; and (c) comparing the level of polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide with a predetermined cut-off value, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of a cancer in the patient. Within certain embodiments, the amount of

mRNA is detected via polymerase chain reaction using, for example, at least one oligonucleotide primer that hybridizes to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide as recited above, or a complement of such a polynucleotide. Within other embodiments, the amount of mRNA is detected using a hybridization technique, employing an oligonucleotide probe that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a polypeptide as recited above, or a complement of such a polynucleotide.

In related aspects, methods are provided for monitoring the progression of a cancer in a patient, comprising the steps of: (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with an oligonucleotide that hybridizes to a polynucleotide that encodes a breast tumor protein; (b) detecting in the sample an amount of a polynucleotide that hybridizes to the oligonucleotide; (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) using a biological sample obtained from the patient at a subsequent point in time; and (d) comparing the amount of polynucleotide detected in step (c) with the amount detected in step (b) and therefrom monitoring the progression of the cancer in the patient.

Within further aspects, the present invention provides antibodies, such as monoclonal antibodies, that bind to a polypeptide as described above, as well as diagnostic kits comprising such antibodies. Diagnostic kits comprising one or more oligonucleotide probes or primers as described above are also provided.

These and other aspects of the present invention will become apparent upon reference to the following detailed description and attached drawings. All references disclosed herein are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety as if each was incorporated individually.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 shows the differential display PCR products, separated by gel electrophoresis, obtained from cDNA prepared from normal breast tissue (lanes 1 and 2) and from cDNA prepared from breast tumor tissue from the same patient (lanes 3 and 4). The arrow indicates the band corresponding to B18Ag1.

Figure 2 is a northern blot comparing the level of B18Ag1 mRNA in breast tumor tissue (lane 1) with the level in normal breast tissue.

Figure 3 shows the level of B18Ag1 mRNA in breast tumor tissue compared to that in various normal and non-breast tumor tissues as determined by RNase protection
5 assays.

Figure 4 is a genomic clone map showing the location of additional retroviral sequences obtained from ends of XbaI restriction digests (provided in SEQ ID NO:3 - SEQ ID NO:10) relative to B18Ag1.

Figures 5A and 5B show the sequencing strategy, genomic organization and
10 predicted open reading frame for the retroviral element containing B18Ag1.

Figure 6 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B18Ag1.

Figure 7 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B17Ag1.

Figure 8 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B17Ag2.
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Figure 9 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B13Ag2a.

Figure 10 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B13Ag1b.
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Figure 11 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B13Ag1a.

Figure 12 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B11Ag1.

Figure 13 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B3CA3c.
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Figure 14 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B9CG1.

Figure 15 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B9CG3.

Figure 16 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B2CA2.

5 Figure 17 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B3CA1.

Figure 18 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B3CA2.

10 Figure 19 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B3CA3.

Figure 20 shows the nucleotide sequence of the representative breast tumor-specific cDNA B4CA1.

Figure 21A depicts RT-PCR analysis of breast tumor genes in breast tumor tissues (lanes 1-8) and normal breast tissues (lanes 9-13) and H₂O (lane 14).

15 Figure 21B depicts RT-PCR analysis of breast tumor genes in prostate tumors (lane 1, 2), colon tumors (lane 3), lung tumor (lane 4), normal prostate (lane 5), normal colon (lane 6), normal kidney (lane 7), normal liver (lane 8), normal lung (lane 9), normal ovary (lanes 10, 18), normal pancreases (lanes 11, 12), normal skeletal muscle (lane 13), normal skin (lane 14), normal stomach (lane 15), normal testes (lane 16), normal small
20 intestine (lane 17), HBL-100 (lane 19), MCF-12A (lane 20), breast tumors (lanes 21-23), H₂O (lane 24), and colon tumor (lane 25).

Figure 22 shows the recognition of a B11Ag1 peptide (referred to as B11-8) by an anti-B11-8 CTL line.

25 Figure 23 shows the recognition of a cell line transduced with the antigen B11Ag1 by the B11-8 specific clone A1.

Figure 24 shows recognition of a lung adenocarcinoma line (LT-140-22) and a breast adenocarcinoma line (CAMA-1) by the B11-8 specific clone A1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

As noted above, the present invention is generally directed to compositions and methods for using the compositions, for example in the therapy and diagnosis of cancer, such as breast cancer. Certain illustrative compositions described herein include

5 breast tumor polypeptides, polynucleotides encoding such polypeptides, binding agents such as antibodies, antigen presenting cells (APCs) and/or immune system cells (*e.g.*, T cells). A "breast tumor protein," as the term is used herein, refers generally to a protein that is expressed in breast tumor cells at a level that is at least two fold, and preferably at least five fold, greater than the level of expression in a normal tissue, as determined using a

10 representative assay provided herein. Certain breast tumor proteins are tumor proteins that react detectably (within an immunoassay, such as an ELISA or Western blot) with antisera of a patient afflicted with breast cancer.

Therefore, in accordance with the above, and as described further below, the present invention provides illustrative polynucleotide compositions having sequences set

15 forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317, illustrative polypeptide compositions having amino acid sequences set forth in SEQ ID NO: 299, 300, 304-306, 308-312 and 314, antibody compositions capable of binding such polypeptides, and numerous additional embodiments employing such compositions, for example in the detection, diagnosis and/or therapy of human breast cancer.

20 POLYNUCLEOTIDE COMPOSITIONS

As used herein, the terms "DNA segment" and "polynucleotide" refer to a DNA molecule that has been isolated free of total genomic DNA of a particular species. Therefore, a DNA segment encoding a polypeptide refers to a DNA segment that contains one or more coding sequences yet is substantially isolated away from, or purified free from,

25 total genomic DNA of the species from which the DNA segment is obtained. Included within the terms "DNA segment" and "polynucleotide" are DNA segments and smaller fragments of such segments, and also recombinant vectors, including, for example, plasmids, cosmids, phagemids, phage, viruses, and the like.

As will be understood by those skilled in the art, the DNA segments of this invention can include genomic sequences, extra-genomic and plasmid-encoded sequences and smaller engineered gene segments that express, or may be adapted to express, proteins, polypeptides, peptides and the like. Such segments may be naturally isolated, or modified
 5 synthetically by the hand of man.

"Isolated," as used herein, means that a polynucleotide is substantially away from other coding sequences, and that the DNA segment does not contain large portions of unrelated coding DNA, such as large chromosomal fragments or other functional genes or polypeptide coding regions. Of course, this refers to the DNA segment as originally
 10 isolated, and does not exclude genes or coding regions later added to the segment by the hand of man.

As will be recognized by the skilled artisan, polynucleotides may be single-stranded (coding or antisense) or double-stranded, and may be DNA (genomic, cDNA or synthetic) or RNA molecules. RNA molecules include HnRNA molecules, which contain
 15 introns and correspond to a DNA molecule in a one-to-one manner, and mRNA molecules, which do not contain introns. Additional coding or non-coding sequences may, but need not, be present within a polynucleotide of the present invention, and a polynucleotide may, but need not, be linked to other molecules and/or support materials.

Polynucleotides may comprise a native sequence (*i.e.*, an endogenous
 20 sequence that encodes a breast tumor protein or a portion thereof) or may comprise a variant, or a biological or antigenic functional equivalent of such a sequence. Polynucleotide variants may contain one or more substitutions, additions, deletions and/or insertions, as further described below, preferably such that the immunogenicity of the encoded polypeptide is not diminished, relative to a native tumor protein. The effect on the
 25 immunogenicity of the encoded polypeptide may generally be assessed as described herein. The term "variants" also encompasses homologous genes of xenogenic origin.

When comparing polynucleotide or polypeptide sequences, two sequences are said to be "identical" if the sequence of nucleotides or amino acids in the two sequences is the same when aligned for maximum correspondence, as described below. Comparisons

between two sequences are typically performed by comparing the sequences over a comparison window to identify and compare local regions of sequence similarity. A "comparison window" as used herein, refers to a segment of at least about 20 contiguous positions, usually 30 to about 75, 40 to about 50, in which a sequence may be compared to a reference sequence of the same number of contiguous positions after the two sequences are optimally aligned.

Optimal alignment of sequences for comparison may be conducted using the Megalign program in the Lasergene suite of bioinformatics software (DNASTAR, Inc., Madison, WI), using default parameters. This program embodies several alignment schemes described in the following references: Dayhoff, M.O. (1978) A model of evolutionary change in proteins – Matrices for detecting distant relationships. In Dayhoff, M.O. (ed.) *Atlas of Protein Sequence and Structure*, National Biomedical Research Foundation, Washington DC Vol. 5, Suppl. 3, pp. 345-358; Hein J. (1990) Unified Approach to Alignment and Phylogenies pp. 626-645 *Methods in Enzymology* vol. 183, Academic Press, Inc., San Diego, CA; Higgins, D.G. and Sharp, P.M. (1989) *CABIOS* 5:151-153; Myers, E.W. and Muller W. (1988) *CABIOS* 4:11-17; Robinson, E.D. (1971) *Comb. Theor* 11:105; Santou, N. Nes, M. (1987) *Mol. Biol. Evol.* 4:406-425; Sneath, P.H.A. and Sokal, R.R. (1973) *Numerical Taxonomy – the Principles and Practice of Numerical Taxonomy*, Freeman Press, San Francisco, CA; Wilbur, W.J. and Lipman, D.J. (1983) *Proc. Natl. Acad., Sci. USA* 80:726-730.

Alternatively, optimal alignment of sequences for comparison may be conducted by the local identity algorithm of Smith and Waterman (1981) *Add. APL. Math* 2:482, by the identity alignment algorithm of Needleman and Wunsch (1970) *J. Mol. Biol.* 48:443, by the search for similarity methods of Pearson and Lipman (1988) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 85: 2444, by computerized implementations of these algorithms (GAP, BESTFIT, BLAST, FASTA, and TFASTA in the Wisconsin Genetics Software Package, Genetics Computer Group (GCG), 575 Science Dr., Madison, WI), or by inspection.

One preferred example of algorithms that are suitable for determining percent sequence identity and sequence similarity are the BLAST and BLAST 2.0

algorithms, which are described in Altschul *et al.* (1977) *Nucl. Acids Res.* 25:3389-3402 and Altschul *et al.* (1990) *J. Mol. Biol.* 215:403-410, respectively. BLAST and BLAST 2.0 can be used, for example with the parameters described herein, to determine percent sequence identity for the polynucleotides and polypeptides of the invention. Software for performing BLAST analyses is publicly available through the National Center for Biotechnology Information. In one illustrative example, cumulative scores can be calculated using, for nucleotide sequences, the parameters M (reward score for a pair of matching residues; always >0) and N (penalty score for mismatching residues; always <0). For amino acid sequences, a scoring matrix can be used to calculate the cumulative score.

Extension of the word hits in each direction are halted when: the cumulative alignment score falls off by the quantity X from its maximum achieved value; the cumulative score goes to zero or below, due to the accumulation of one or more negative-scoring residue alignments; or the end of either sequence is reached. The BLAST algorithm parameters W, T and X determine the sensitivity and speed of the alignment. The BLASTN program (for nucleotide sequences) uses as defaults a wordlength (W) of 11, and expectation (E) of 10, and the BLOSUM62 scoring matrix (see Henikoff and Henikoff (1989) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 89:10915) alignments, (B) of 50, expectation (E) of 10, M=5, N=-4 and a comparison of both strands.

Preferably, the "percentage of sequence identity" is determined by comparing two optimally aligned sequences over a window of comparison of at least 20 positions, wherein the portion of the polynucleotide or polypeptide sequence in the comparison window may comprise additions or deletions (*i.e.*, gaps) of 20 percent or less, usually 5 to 15 percent, or 10 to 12 percent, as compared to the reference sequences (which does not comprise additions or deletions) for optimal alignment of the two sequences. The percentage is calculated by determining the number of positions at which the identical nucleic acid bases or amino acid residue occurs in both sequences to yield the number of matched positions, dividing the number of matched positions by the total number of positions in the reference sequence (*i.e.*, the window size) and multiplying the results by 100 to yield the percentage of sequence identity.

Therefore, the present invention encompasses polynucleotide and polypeptide sequences having substantial identity to the sequences disclosed herein, for example those comprising at least 50% sequence identity, preferably at least 55%, 60%, 65%, 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, or 99% or higher, sequence
 5 identity compared to a polynucleotide or polypeptide sequence of this invention using the methods described herein, (*e.g.*, BLAST analysis using standard parameters, as described below). One skilled in this art will recognize that these values can be appropriately adjusted to determine corresponding identity of proteins encoded by two nucleotide sequences by taking into account codon degeneracy, amino acid similarity, reading frame
 10 positioning and the like.

In additional embodiments, the present invention provides isolated polynucleotides and polypeptides comprising various lengths of contiguous stretches of sequence identical to or complementary to one or more of the sequences disclosed herein. For example, polynucleotides are provided by this invention that comprise at least about
 15 15, 20, 30, 40, 50, 75, 100, 150, 200, 300, 400, 500 or 1000 or more contiguous nucleotides of one or more of the sequences disclosed herein as well as all intermediate lengths there between. It will be readily understood that "intermediate lengths", in this context, means any length between the quoted values, such as 16, 17, 18, 19, *etc.*; 21, 22, 23, *etc.*; 30, 31, 32, *etc.*; 50, 51, 52, 53, *etc.*; 100, 101, 102, 103, *etc.*; 150, 151, 152, 153, *etc.*; including all
 20 integers through 200-500; 500-1,000, and the like.

The polynucleotides of the present invention, or fragments thereof, regardless of the length of the coding sequence itself, may be combined with other DNA sequences, such as promoters, polyadenylation signals, additional restriction enzyme sites, multiple cloning sites, other coding segments, and the like, such that their overall length
 25 may vary considerably. It is therefore contemplated that a nucleic acid fragment of almost any length may be employed, with the total length preferably being limited by the ease of preparation and use in the intended recombinant DNA protocol. For example, illustrative DNA segments with total lengths of about 10,000, about 5000, about 3000, about 2,000, about 1,000, about 500, about 200, about 100, about 50 base pairs in length, and the like,

(including all intermediate lengths) are contemplated to be useful in many implementations of this invention.

In other embodiments, the present invention is directed to polynucleotides that are capable of hybridizing under moderately stringent conditions to a polynucleotide sequence provided herein, or a fragment thereof, or a complementary sequence thereof. Hybridization techniques are well known in the art of molecular biology. For purposes of illustration, suitable moderately stringent conditions for testing the hybridization of a polynucleotide of this invention with other polynucleotides include prewashing in a solution of 5 X SSC, 0.5% SDS, 1.0 mM EDTA (pH 8.0); hybridizing at 50°C-65°C, 5 X SSC, overnight; followed by washing twice at 65°C for 20 minutes with each of 2X, 0.5X and 0.2X SSC containing 0.1% SDS.

Moreover, it will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that, as a result of the degeneracy of the genetic code, there are many nucleotide sequences that encode a polypeptide as described herein. Some of these polynucleotides bear minimal homology to the nucleotide sequence of any native gene. Nonetheless, polynucleotides that vary due to differences in codon usage are specifically contemplated by the present invention. Further, alleles of the genes comprising the polynucleotide sequences provided herein are within the scope of the present invention. Alleles are endogenous genes that are altered as a result of one or more mutations, such as deletions, additions and/or substitutions of nucleotides. The resulting mRNA and protein may, but need not, have an altered structure or function. Alleles may be identified using standard techniques (such as hybridization, amplification and/or database sequence comparison).

PROBES AND PRIMERS

In other embodiments of the present invention, the polynucleotide sequences provided herein can be advantageously used as probes or primers for nucleic acid hybridization. As such, it is contemplated that nucleic acid segments that comprise a sequence region of at least about 15 nucleotide long contiguous sequence that has the same sequence as, or is complementary to, a 15 nucleotide long contiguous sequence disclosed

herein will find particular utility. Longer contiguous identical or complementary sequences, *e.g.*, those of about 20, 30, 40, 50, 100, 200, 500, 1000 (including all intermediate lengths) and even up to full length sequences will also be of use in certain embodiments.

5 The ability of such nucleic acid probes to specifically hybridize to a sequence of interest will enable them to be of use in detecting the presence of complementary sequences in a given sample. However, other uses are also envisioned, such as the use of the sequence information for the preparation of mutant species primers, or primers for use in preparing other genetic constructions.

10 Polynucleotide molecules having sequence regions consisting of contiguous nucleotide stretches of 10-14, 15-20, 30, 50, or even of 100-200 nucleotides or so (including intermediate lengths as well), identical or complementary to a polynucleotide sequence disclosed herein, are particularly contemplated as hybridization probes for use in, *e.g.*, Southern and Northern blotting. This would allow a gene product, or fragment
15 thereof, to be analyzed, both in diverse cell types and also in various bacterial cells. The total size of fragment, as well as the size of the complementary stretch(es), will ultimately depend on the intended use or application of the particular nucleic acid segment. Smaller fragments will generally find use in hybridization embodiments, wherein the length of the contiguous complementary region may be varied, such as between about 15 and about 100
20 nucleotides, but larger contiguous complementarity stretches may be used, according to the length complementary sequences one wishes to detect.

 The use of a hybridization probe of about 15-25 nucleotides in length allows the formation of a duplex molecule that is both stable and selective. Molecules having contiguous complementary sequences over stretches greater than 15 bases in length are
25 generally preferred, though, in order to increase stability and selectivity of the hybrid, and thereby improve the quality and degree of specific hybrid molecules obtained. One will generally prefer to design nucleic acid molecules having gene-complementary stretches of 15 to 25 contiguous nucleotides, or even longer where desired.

Hybridization probes may be selected from any portion of any of the sequences disclosed herein. All that is required is to review the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317, or to any continuous portion of the sequence, from about 15-25 nucleotides in length up to and including the full length sequence, that one wishes to utilize as a probe or primer. The choice of probe and primer sequences may be governed by various factors. For example, one may wish to employ primers from towards the termini of the total sequence.

Small polynucleotide segments or fragments may be readily prepared by, for example, directly synthesizing the fragment by chemical means, as is commonly practiced using an automated oligonucleotide synthesizer. Also, fragments may be obtained by application of nucleic acid reproduction technology, such as the PCR™ technology of U. S. Patent 4,683,202 (incorporated herein by reference), by introducing selected sequences into recombinant vectors for recombinant production, and by other recombinant DNA techniques generally known to those of skill in the art of molecular biology.

The nucleotide sequences of the invention may be used for their ability to selectively form duplex molecules with complementary stretches of the entire gene or gene fragments of interest. Depending on the application envisioned, one will typically desire to employ varying conditions of hybridization to achieve varying degrees of selectivity of probe towards target sequence. For applications requiring high selectivity, one will typically desire to employ relatively stringent conditions to form the hybrids, *e.g.*, one will select relatively low salt and/or high temperature conditions, such as provided by a salt concentration of from about 0.02 M to about 0.15 M salt at temperatures of from about 50°C to about 70°C. Such selective conditions tolerate little, if any, mismatch between the probe and the template or target strand, and would be particularly suitable for isolating related sequences.

Of course, for some applications, for example, where one desires to prepare mutants employing a mutant primer strand hybridized to an underlying template, less stringent (reduced stringency) hybridization conditions will typically be needed in order to allow formation of the heteroduplex. In these circumstances, one may desire to employ salt

conditions such as those of from about 0.15 M to about 0.9 M salt, at temperatures ranging from about 20°C to about 55°C. Cross-hybridizing species can thereby be readily identified as positively hybridizing signals with respect to control hybridizations. In any case, it is generally appreciated that conditions can be rendered more stringent by the
 5 addition of increasing amounts of formamide, which serves to destabilize the hybrid duplex in the same manner as increased temperature. Thus, hybridization conditions can be readily manipulated, and thus will generally be a method of choice depending on the desired results.

POLYNUCLEOTIDE IDENTIFICATION AND CHARACTERIZATION

10 Polynucleotides may be identified, prepared and/or manipulated using any of a variety of well established techniques. For example, a polynucleotide may be identified, as described in more detail below, by screening a microarray of cDNAs for tumor-associated expression (*i.e.*, expression that is at least two fold greater in a tumor than in normal tissue, as determined using a representative assay provided herein). Such screens
 15 may be performed, for example, using a Synteni microarray (Palo Alto, CA) according to the manufacturer's instructions (and essentially as described by Schena *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 93:10614-10619, 1996 and Heller *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 94:2150-2155, 1997). Alternatively, polynucleotides may be amplified from cDNA prepared from cells expressing the proteins described herein, such as breast tumor cells.
 20 Such polynucleotides may be amplified via polymerase chain reaction (PCR). For this approach, sequence-specific primers may be designed based on the sequences provided herein, and may be purchased or synthesized.

An amplified portion of a polynucleotide of the present invention may be used to isolate a full length gene from a suitable library (*e.g.*, a breast tumor cDNA library)
 25 using well known techniques. Within such techniques, a library (cDNA or genomic) is screened using one or more polynucleotide probes or primers suitable for amplification. Preferably, a library is size-selected to include larger molecules. Random primed libraries

may also be preferred for identifying 5' and upstream regions of genes. Genomic libraries are preferred for obtaining introns and extending 5' sequences.

For hybridization techniques, a partial sequence may be labeled (*e.g.*, by nick-translation or end-labeling with ^{32}P) using well known techniques. A bacterial or bacteriophage library is then generally screened by hybridizing filters containing denatured bacterial colonies (or lawns containing phage plaques) with the labeled probe (*see* Sambrook *et al.*, *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, Cold Spring Harbor, NY, 1989). Hybridizing colonies or plaques are selected and expanded, and the DNA is isolated for further analysis. cDNA clones may be analyzed to determine the amount of additional sequence by, for example, PCR using a primer from the partial sequence and a primer from the vector. Restriction maps and partial sequences may be generated to identify one or more overlapping clones. The complete sequence may then be determined using standard techniques, which may involve generating a series of deletion clones. The resulting overlapping sequences can then be assembled into a single contiguous sequence. A full length cDNA molecule can be generated by ligating suitable fragments, using well known techniques.

Alternatively, there are numerous amplification techniques for obtaining a full length coding sequence from a partial cDNA sequence. Within such techniques, amplification is generally performed via PCR. Any of a variety of commercially available kits may be used to perform the amplification step. Primers may be designed using, for example, software well known in the art. Primers are preferably 22-30 nucleotides in length, have a GC content of at least 50% and anneal to the target sequence at temperatures of about 68°C to 72°C. The amplified region may be sequenced as described above, and overlapping sequences assembled into a contiguous sequence.

One such amplification technique is inverse PCR (*see* Triglia *et al.*, *Nucl. Acids Res.* 16:8186, 1988), which uses restriction enzymes to generate a fragment in the known region of the gene. The fragment is then circularized by intramolecular ligation and used as a template for PCR with divergent primers derived from the known region. Within an alternative approach, sequences adjacent to a partial sequence may be retrieved by

amplification with a primer to a linker sequence and a primer specific to a known region. The amplified sequences are typically subjected to a second round of amplification with the same linker primer and a second primer specific to the known region. A variation on this procedure, which employs two primers that initiate extension in opposite directions from the known sequence, is described in WO 96/38591. Another such technique is known as "rapid amplification of cDNA ends" or RACE. This technique involves the use of an internal primer and an external primer, which hybridizes to a polyA region or vector sequence, to identify sequences that are 5' and 3' of a known sequence. Additional techniques include capture PCR (Lagerstrom *et al.*, *PCR Methods Applic.* 1:111-19, 1991) and walking PCR (Parker *et al.*, *Nucl. Acids. Res.* 19:3055-60, 1991). Other methods employing amplification may also be employed to obtain a full length cDNA sequence.

In certain instances, it is possible to obtain a full length cDNA sequence by analysis of sequences provided in an expressed sequence tag (EST) database, such as that available from GenBank. Searches for overlapping ESTs may generally be performed using well known programs (*e.g.*, NCBI BLAST searches), and such ESTs may be used to generate a contiguous full length sequence. Full length DNA sequences may also be obtained by analysis of genomic fragments.

POLYNUCLEOTIDE EXPRESSION IN HOST CELLS

In other embodiments of the invention, polynucleotide sequences or fragments thereof which encode polypeptides of the invention, or fusion proteins or functional equivalents thereof, may be used in recombinant DNA molecules to direct expression of a polypeptide in appropriate host cells. Due to the inherent degeneracy of the genetic code, other DNA sequences that encode substantially the same or a functionally equivalent amino acid sequence may be produced and these sequences may be used to clone and express a given polypeptide.

As will be understood by those of skill in the art, it may be advantageous in some instances to produce polypeptide-encoding nucleotide sequences possessing non-naturally occurring codons. For example, codons preferred by a particular prokaryotic or

eukaryotic host can be selected to increase the rate of protein expression or to produce a recombinant RNA transcript having desirable properties, such as a half-life which is longer than that of a transcript generated from the naturally occurring sequence.

Moreover, the polynucleotide sequences of the present invention can be engineered using methods generally known in the art in order to alter polypeptide encoding sequences for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to, alterations which modify the cloning, processing, and/or expression of the gene product. For example, DNA shuffling by random fragmentation and PCR reassembly of gene fragments and synthetic oligonucleotides may be used to engineer the nucleotide sequences. In addition, site-directed mutagenesis may be used to insert new restriction sites, alter glycosylation patterns, change codon preference, produce splice variants, or introduce mutations, and so forth.

In another embodiment of the invention, natural, modified, or recombinant nucleic acid sequences may be ligated to a heterologous sequence to encode a fusion protein. For example, to screen peptide libraries for inhibitors of polypeptide activity, it may be useful to encode a chimeric protein that can be recognized by a commercially available antibody. A fusion protein may also be engineered to contain a cleavage site located between the polypeptide-encoding sequence and the heterologous protein sequence, so that the polypeptide may be cleaved and purified away from the heterologous moiety.

Sequences encoding a desired polypeptide may be synthesized, in whole or in part, using chemical methods well known in the art (see Caruthers, M. H. *et al.* (1980) *Nucl. Acids Res. Symp. Ser.* 215-223, Horn, T. *et al.* (1980) *Nucl. Acids Res. Symp. Ser.* 225-232). Alternatively, the protein itself may be produced using chemical methods to synthesize the amino acid sequence of a polypeptide, or a portion thereof. For example, peptide synthesis can be performed using various solid-phase techniques (Roberge, J. Y. *et al.* (1995) *Science* 269:202-204) and automated synthesis may be achieved, for example, using the ABI 431A Peptide Synthesizer (Perkin Elmer, Palo Alto, CA).

A newly synthesized peptide may be substantially purified by preparative high performance liquid chromatography (*e.g.*, Creighton, T. (1983) *Proteins, Structures*

and Molecular Principles, WH Freeman and Co., New York, N.Y.) or other comparable techniques available in the art. The composition of the synthetic peptides may be confirmed by amino acid analysis or sequencing (*e.g.*, the Edman degradation procedure). Additionally, the amino acid sequence of a polypeptide, or any part thereof, may be altered
 5 during direct synthesis and/or combined using chemical methods with sequences from other proteins, or any part thereof, to produce a variant polypeptide.

In order to express a desired polypeptide, the nucleotide sequences encoding the polypeptide, or functional equivalents, may be inserted into appropriate expression vector, *i.e.*, a vector which contains the necessary elements for the transcription and
 10 translation of the inserted coding sequence. Methods which are well known to those skilled in the art may be used to construct expression vectors containing sequences encoding a polypeptide of interest and appropriate transcriptional and translational control elements. These methods include *in vitro* recombinant DNA techniques, synthetic techniques, and *in vivo* genetic recombination. Such techniques are described in Sambrook,
 15 J. *et al.* (1989) Molecular Cloning, A Laboratory Manual, Cold Spring Harbor Press, Plainview, N.Y., and Ausubel, F. M. *et al.* (1989) Current Protocols in Molecular Biology, John Wiley & Sons, New York, N.Y.

A variety of expression vector/host systems may be utilized to contain and express polynucleotide sequences. These include, but are not limited to, microorganisms
 20 such as bacteria transformed with recombinant bacteriophage, plasmid, or cosmid DNA expression vectors; yeast transformed with yeast expression vectors; insect cell systems infected with virus expression vectors (*e.g.*, baculovirus); plant cell systems transformed with virus expression vectors (*e.g.*, cauliflower mosaic virus, CaMV; tobacco mosaic virus, TMV) or with bacterial expression vectors (*e.g.*, Ti or pBR322 plasmids); or animal cell
 25 systems.

The "control elements" or "regulatory sequences" present in an expression vector are those non-translated regions of the vector--enhancers, promoters, 5' and 3' untranslated regions--which interact with host cellular proteins to carry out transcription and translation. Such elements may vary in their strength and specificity. Depending on the

vector system and host utilized, any number of suitable transcription and translation elements, including constitutive and inducible promoters, may be used. For example, when cloning in bacterial systems, inducible promoters such as the hybrid lacZ promoter of the PBLUESCRIPT phagemid (Stratagene, La Jolla, Calif.) or PSPO1 plasmid (Gibco BRL, Gaithersburg, MD) and the like may be used. In mammalian cell systems, promoters from mammalian genes or from mammalian viruses are generally preferred. If it is necessary to generate a cell line that contains multiple copies of the sequence encoding a polypeptide, vectors based on SV40 or EBV may be advantageously used with an appropriate selectable marker.

10 In bacterial systems, a number of expression vectors may be selected depending upon the use intended for the expressed polypeptide. For example, when large quantities are needed, for example for the induction of antibodies, vectors which direct high level expression of fusion proteins that are readily purified may be used. Such vectors include, but are not limited to, the multifunctional *E. coli* cloning and expression vectors
 15 such as BLUESCRIPT (Stratagene), in which the sequence encoding the polypeptide of interest may be ligated into the vector in frame with sequences for the amino-terminal Met and the subsequent 7 residues of β -galactosidase so that a hybrid protein is produced; pIN vectors (Van Heeke, G. and S. M. Schuster (1989) *J. Biol. Chem.* 264:5503-5509); and the like. pGEX Vectors (Promega, Madison, Wis.) may also be used to express foreign
 20 polypeptides as fusion proteins with glutathione S-transferase (GST). In general, such fusion proteins are soluble and can easily be purified from lysed cells by adsorption to glutathione-agarose beads followed by elution in the presence of free glutathione. Proteins made in such systems may be designed to include heparin, thrombin, or factor XA protease cleavage sites so that the cloned polypeptide of interest can be released from the GST
 25 moiety at will.

In the yeast, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, a number of vectors containing constitutive or inducible promoters such as alpha factor, alcohol oxidase, and PGH may be used. For reviews, see Ausubel *et al.* (supra) and Grant *et al.* (1987) *Methods Enzymol.* 153:516-544.

In cases where plant expression vectors are used, the expression of sequences encoding polypeptides may be driven by any of a number of promoters. For example, viral promoters such as the 35S and 19S promoters of CaMV may be used alone or in combination with the omega leader sequence from TMV (Takamatsu, N. (1987) *EMBO J.* 6:307-311. Alternatively, plant promoters such as the small subunit of RUBISCO or heat shock promoters may be used (Coruzzi, G. *et al.* (1984) *EMBO J.* 3:1671-1680; Broglie, R. *et al.* (1984) *Science* 224:838-843; and Winter, J. *et al.* (1991) *Results Probl. Cell Differ.* 17:85-105). These constructs can be introduced into plant cells by direct DNA transformation or pathogen-mediated transfection. Such techniques are described in a number of generally available reviews (see, for example, Hobbs, S. or Murry, L. E. in McGraw Hill Yearbook of Science and Technology (1992) McGraw Hill, New York, N.Y.; pp. 191-196).

An insect system may also be used to express a polypeptide of interest. For example, in one such system, Autographa californica nuclear polyhedrosis virus (AcNPV) is used as a vector to express foreign genes in *Spodoptera frugiperda* cells or in *Trichoplusia* larvae. The sequences encoding the polypeptide may be cloned into a non-essential region of the virus, such as the polyhedrin gene, and placed under control of the polyhedrin promoter. Successful insertion of the polypeptide-encoding sequence will render the polyhedrin gene inactive and produce recombinant virus lacking coat protein. The recombinant viruses may then be used to infect, for example, *S. frugiperda* cells or *Trichoplusia* larvae in which the polypeptide of interest may be expressed (Engelhard, E. K. *et al.* (1994) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 91:3224-3227).

In mammalian host cells, a number of viral-based expression systems are generally available. For example, in cases where an adenovirus is used as an expression vector, sequences encoding a polypeptide of interest may be ligated into an adenovirus transcription/translation complex consisting of the late promoter and tripartite leader sequence. Insertion in a non-essential E1 or E3 region of the viral genome may be used to obtain a viable virus which is capable of expressing the polypeptide in infected host cells (Logan, J. and Shenk, T. (1984) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 81:3655-3659). In addition,

transcription enhancers, such as the Rous sarcoma virus (RSV) enhancer, may be used to increase expression in mammalian host cells.

Specific initiation signals may also be used to achieve more efficient translation of sequences encoding a polypeptide of interest. Such signals include the ATG initiation codon and adjacent sequences. In cases where sequences encoding the polypeptide, its initiation codon, and upstream sequences are inserted into the appropriate expression vector, no additional transcriptional or translational control signals may be needed. However, in cases where only coding sequence, or a portion thereof, is inserted, exogenous translational control signals including the ATG initiation codon should be provided. Furthermore, the initiation codon should be in the correct reading frame to ensure translation of the entire insert. Exogenous translational elements and initiation codons may be of various origins, both natural and synthetic. The efficiency of expression may be enhanced by the inclusion of enhancers which are appropriate for the particular cell system which is used, such as those described in the literature (Scharf, D. *et al.* (1994) *Results Probl. Cell Differ.* 20:125-162).

In addition, a host cell strain may be chosen for its ability to modulate the expression of the inserted sequences or to process the expressed protein in the desired fashion. Such modifications of the polypeptide include, but are not limited to, acetylation, carboxylation, glycosylation, phosphorylation, lipidation, and acylation. Post-translational processing which cleaves a "prepro" form of the protein may also be used to facilitate correct insertion, folding and/or function. Different host cells such as CHO, HeLa, MDCK, HEK293, and WI38, which have specific cellular machinery and characteristic mechanisms for such post-translational activities, may be chosen to ensure the correct modification and processing of the foreign protein.

For long-term, high-yield production of recombinant proteins, stable expression is generally preferred. For example, cell lines which stably express a polynucleotide of interest may be transformed using expression vectors which may contain viral origins of replication and/or endogenous expression elements and a selectable marker gene on the same or on a separate vector. Following the introduction of the vector, cells

may be allowed to grow for 1-2 days in an enriched media before they are switched to selective media. The purpose of the selectable marker is to confer resistance to selection, and its presence allows growth and recovery of cells which successfully express the introduced sequences. Resistant clones of stably transformed cells may be proliferated
 5 using tissue culture techniques appropriate to the cell type.

Any number of selection systems may be used to recover transformed cell lines. These include, but are not limited to, the herpes simplex virus thymidine kinase (Wigler, M. *et al.* (1977) *Cell* 11:223-32) and adenine phosphoribosyltransferase (Lowy, I. *et al.* (1990) *Cell* 22:817-23) genes which can be employed in tk.sup.- or aprt.sup.- cells,
 10 respectively. Also, antimetabolite, antibiotic or herbicide resistance can be used as the basis for selection; for example, dhfr which confers resistance to methotrexate (Wigler, M. *et al.* (1980) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 77:3567-70); npt, which confers resistance to the aminoglycosides, neomycin and G-418 (Colbere-Garapin, F. *et al.* (1981) *J. Mol. Biol.* 150:1-14); and als or pat, which confer resistance to chlorsulfuron and phosphinotricin
 15 acetyltransferase, respectively (Murry, *supra*). Additional selectable genes have been described, for example, trpB, which allows cells to utilize indole in place of tryptophan, or hisD, which allows cells to utilize histinol in place of histidine (Hartman, S. C. and R. C. Mulligan (1988) *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 85:8047-51). Recently, the use of visible markers has gained popularity with such markers as anthocyanins, beta-glucuronidase and its
 20 substrate GUS, and luciferase and its substrate luciferin, being widely used not only to identify transformants, but also to quantify the amount of transient or stable protein expression attributable to a specific vector system (Rhodes, C. A. *et al.* (1995) *Methods Mol. Biol.* 55:121-131).

Although the presence/absence of marker gene expression suggests that the
 25 gene of interest is also present, its presence and expression may need to be confirmed. For example, if the sequence encoding a polypeptide is inserted within a marker gene sequence, recombinant cells containing sequences can be identified by the absence of marker gene function. Alternatively, a marker gene can be placed in tandem with a polypeptide-encoding sequence under the control of a single promoter. Expression of the marker gene

in response to induction or selection usually indicates expression of the tandem gene as well.

Alternatively, host cells which contain and express a desired polynucleotide sequence may be identified by a variety of procedures known to those of skill in the art.

- 5 These procedures include, but are not limited to, DNA-DNA or DNA-RNA hybridizations and protein bioassay or immunoassay techniques which include membrane, solution, or chip based technologies for the detection and/or quantification of nucleic acid or protein.

- 10 A variety of protocols for detecting and measuring the expression of polynucleotide-encoded products, using either polyclonal or monoclonal antibodies specific for the product are known in the art. Examples include enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA), radioimmunoassay (RIA), and fluorescence activated cell sorting (FACS). A two-site, monoclonal-based immunoassay utilizing monoclonal antibodies reactive to two non-interfering epitopes on a given polypeptide may be preferred for some applications, but a competitive binding assay may also be employed. These and
- 15 other assays are described, among other places, in Hampton, R. *et al.* (1990; Serological Methods, a Laboratory Manual, APS Press, St Paul, Minn.) and Maddox, D. E. *et al.* (1983; *J. Exp. Med.* 158:1211-1216).

- 20 A wide variety of labels and conjugation techniques are known by those skilled in the art and may be used in various nucleic acid and amino acid assays. Means for producing labeled hybridization or PCR probes for detecting sequences related to polynucleotides include oligolabeling, nick translation, end-labeling or PCR amplification using a labeled nucleotide. Alternatively, the sequences, or any portions thereof may be cloned into a vector for the production of an mRNA probe. Such vectors are known in the art, are commercially available, and may be used to synthesize RNA probes in vitro by
- 25 addition of an appropriate RNA polymerase such as T7, T3, or SP6 and labeled nucleotides. These procedures may be conducted using a variety of commercially available kits. Suitable reporter molecules or labels, which may be used include radionuclides, enzymes, fluorescent, chemiluminescent, or chromogenic agents as well as substrates, cofactors, inhibitors, magnetic particles, and the like.

Host cells transformed with a polynucleotide sequence of interest may be cultured under conditions suitable for the expression and recovery of the protein from cell culture. The protein produced by a recombinant cell may be secreted or contained intracellularly depending on the sequence and/or the vector used. As will be understood by those of skill in the art, expression vectors containing polynucleotides of the invention may be designed to contain signal sequences which direct secretion of the encoded polypeptide through a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell membrane. Other recombinant constructions may be used to join sequences encoding a polypeptide of interest to nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide domain which will facilitate purification of soluble proteins. Such purification facilitating domains include, but are not limited to, metal chelating peptides such as histidine-tryptophan modules that allow purification on immobilized metals, protein A domains that allow purification on immobilized immunoglobulin, and the domain utilized in the FLAGS extension/affinity purification system (Immunex Corp., Seattle, Wash.). The inclusion of cleavable linker sequences such as those specific for Factor XA or enterokinase (Invitrogen, San Diego, Calif.) between the purification domain and the encoded polypeptide may be used to facilitate purification. One such expression vector provides for expression of a fusion protein containing a polypeptide of interest and a nucleic acid encoding 6 histidine residues preceding a thioredoxin or an enterokinase cleavage site. The histidine residues facilitate purification on IMIAC (immobilized metal ion affinity chromatography) as described in Porath, J. *et al.* (1992, *Prot. Exp. Purif.* 3:263-281) while the enterokinase cleavage site provides a means for purifying the desired polypeptide from the fusion protein. A discussion of vectors which contain fusion proteins is provided in Kroll, D. J. *et al.* (1993; *DNA Cell Biol.* 12:441-453).

In addition to recombinant production methods, polypeptides of the invention, and fragments thereof, may be produced by direct peptide synthesis using solid-phase techniques (Merrifield J. (1963) *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 85:2149-2154). Protein synthesis may be performed using manual techniques or by automation. Automated synthesis may be achieved, for example, using Applied Biosystems 431A Peptide Synthesizer (Perkin

Elmer). Alternatively, various fragments may be chemically synthesized separately and combined using chemical methods to produce the full length molecule.

SITE-SPECIFIC MUTAGENESIS

Site-specific mutagenesis is a technique useful in the preparation of individual peptides, or biologically functional equivalent polypeptides, through specific mutagenesis of the underlying polynucleotides that encode them. The technique, well-known to those of skill in the art, further provides a ready ability to prepare and test sequence variants, for example, incorporating one or more of the foregoing considerations, by introducing one or more nucleotide sequence changes into the DNA. Site-specific mutagenesis allows the production of mutants through the use of specific oligonucleotide sequences which encode the DNA sequence of the desired mutation, as well as a sufficient number of adjacent nucleotides, to provide a primer sequence of sufficient size and sequence complexity to form a stable duplex on both sides of the deletion junction being traversed. Mutations may be employed in a selected polynucleotide sequence to improve, alter, decrease, modify, or otherwise change the properties of the polynucleotide itself, and/or alter the properties, activity, composition, stability, or primary sequence of the encoded polypeptide.

In certain embodiments of the present invention, the inventors contemplate the mutagenesis of the disclosed polynucleotide sequences to alter one or more properties of the encoded polypeptide, such as the antigenicity of a polypeptide vaccine. The techniques of site-specific mutagenesis are well-known in the art, and are widely used to create variants of both polypeptides and polynucleotides. For example, site-specific mutagenesis is often used to alter a specific portion of a DNA molecule. In such embodiments, a primer comprising typically about 14 to about 25 nucleotides or so in length is employed, with about 5 to about 10 residues on both sides of the junction of the sequence being altered.

As will be appreciated by those of skill in the art, site-specific mutagenesis techniques have often employed a phage vector that exists in both a single stranded and

double stranded form. Typical vectors useful in site-directed mutagenesis include vectors such as the M13 phage. These phage are readily commercially-available and their use is generally well-known to those skilled in the art. Double-stranded plasmids are also routinely employed in site directed mutagenesis that eliminates the step of transferring the
 5 gene of interest from a plasmid to a phage.

In general, site-directed mutagenesis in accordance herewith is performed by first obtaining a single-stranded vector or melting apart of two strands of a double-stranded vector that includes within its sequence a DNA sequence that encodes the desired peptide. An oligonucleotide primer bearing the desired mutated sequence is
 10 prepared, generally synthetically. This primer is then annealed with the single-stranded vector, and subjected to DNA polymerizing enzymes such as *E. coli* polymerase I Klenow fragment, in order to complete the synthesis of the mutation-bearing strand. Thus, a heteroduplex is formed wherein one strand encodes the original non-mutated sequence and the second strand bears the desired mutation. This heteroduplex vector is then used to
 15 transform appropriate cells, such as *E. coli* cells, and clones are selected which include recombinant vectors bearing the mutated sequence arrangement.

The preparation of sequence variants of the selected peptide-encoding DNA segments using site-directed mutagenesis provides a means of producing potentially useful species and is not meant to be limiting as there are other ways in which sequence variants
 20 of peptides and the DNA sequences encoding them may be obtained. For example, recombinant vectors encoding the desired peptide sequence may be treated with mutagenic agents, such as hydroxylamine, to obtain sequence variants. Specific details regarding these methods and protocols are found in the teachings of Maloy *et al.*, 1994; Segal, 1976; Prokop and Bajpai, 1991; Kuby, 1994; and Maniatis *et al.*, 1982, each incorporated herein
 25 by reference, for that purpose.

As used herein, the term "oligonucleotide directed mutagenesis procedure" refers to template-dependent processes and vector-mediated propagation which result in an increase in the concentration of a specific nucleic acid molecule relative to its initial concentration, or in an increase in the concentration of a detectable signal, such as

amplification. As used herein, the term "oligonucleotide directed mutagenesis procedure" is intended to refer to a process that involves the template-dependent extension of a primer molecule. The term template dependent process refers to nucleic acid synthesis of an RNA or a DNA molecule wherein the sequence of the newly synthesized strand of nucleic acid is dictated by the well-known rules of complementary base pairing (see, for example, Watson, 1987). Typically, vector mediated methodologies involve the introduction of the nucleic acid fragment into a DNA or RNA vector, the clonal amplification of the vector, and the recovery of the amplified nucleic acid fragment. Examples of such methodologies are provided by U. S. Patent No. 4,237,224, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

POLYNUCLEOTIDE AMPLIFICATION TECHNIQUES

A number of template dependent processes are available to amplify the target sequences of interest present in a sample. One of the best known amplification methods is the polymerase chain reaction (PCR™) which is described in detail in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,683,195, 4,683,202 and 4,800,159, each of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. Briefly, in PCR™, two primer sequences are prepared which are complementary to regions on opposite complementary strands of the target sequence. An excess of deoxynucleoside triphosphates is added to a reaction mixture along with a DNA polymerase (*e.g.*, *Taq* polymerase). If the target sequence is present in a sample, the primers will bind to the target and the polymerase will cause the primers to be extended along the target sequence by adding on nucleotides. By raising and lowering the temperature of the reaction mixture, the extended primers will dissociate from the target to form reaction products, excess primers will bind to the target and to the reaction product and the process is repeated. Preferably reverse transcription and PCR™ amplification procedure may be performed in order to quantify the amount of mRNA amplified. Polymerase chain reaction methodologies are well known in the art.

Another method for amplification is the ligase chain reaction (referred to as LCR), disclosed in Eur. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. 320,308 (specifically incorporated herein by

reference in its entirety). In LCR, two complementary probe pairs are prepared, and in the presence of the target sequence, each pair will bind to opposite complementary strands of the target such that they abut. In the presence of a ligase, the two probe pairs will link to form a single unit. By temperature cycling, as in PCR™, bound ligated units dissociate
 5 from the target and then serve as "target sequences" for ligation of excess probe pairs. U.S. Patent No. 4,883,750, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, describes an alternative method of amplification similar to LCR for binding probe pairs to a target sequence.

Qbeta Replicase, described in PCT Intl. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. PCT/US87/00880, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, may also be used as still
 10 another amplification method in the present invention. In this method, a replicative sequence of RNA that has a region complementary to that of a target is added to a sample in the presence of an RNA polymerase. The polymerase will copy the replicative sequence that can then be detected.

15 An isothermal amplification method, in which restriction endonucleases and ligases are used to achieve the amplification of target molecules that contain nucleotide 5'-[α-thio]triphosphates in one strand of a restriction site (Walker *et al.*, 1992, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety), may also be useful in the amplification of nucleic acids in the present invention.

20 Strand Displacement Amplification (SDA) is another method of carrying out isothermal amplification of nucleic acids which involves multiple rounds of strand displacement and synthesis, *i.e.* nick translation. A similar method, called Repair Chain Reaction (RCR) is another method of amplification which may be useful in the present invention and is involves annealing several probes throughout a region targeted for
 25 amplification, followed by a repair reaction in which only two of the four bases are present. The other two bases can be added as biotinylated derivatives for easy detection. A similar approach is used in SDA.

Sequences can also be detected using a cyclic probe reaction (CPR). In CPR, a probe having a 3' and 5' sequences of non-target DNA and an internal or "middle"

sequence of the target protein specific RNA is hybridized to DNA which is present in a sample. Upon hybridization, the reaction is treated with RNaseH, and the products of the probe are identified as distinctive products by generating a signal that is released after digestion. The original template is annealed to another cycling probe and the reaction is
 5 repeated. Thus, CPR involves amplifying a signal generated by hybridization of a probe to a target gene specific expressed nucleic acid.

Still other amplification methods described in Great Britain Pat. Appl. No. 2 202 328, and in PCT Intl. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. PCT/US89/01025, each of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, may be used in accordance with the present
 10 invention. In the former application, "modified" primers are used in a PCR-like, template and enzyme dependent synthesis. The primers may be modified by labeling with a capture moiety (*e.g.*, biotin) and/or a detector moiety (*e.g.*, enzyme). In the latter application, an excess of labeled probes is added to a sample. In the presence of the target sequence, the probe binds and is cleaved catalytically. After cleavage, the target sequence is released
 15 intact to be bound by excess probe. Cleavage of the labeled probe signals the presence of the target sequence.

Other nucleic acid amplification procedures include transcription-based amplification systems (TAS) (Kwoh *et al.*, 1989; PCT Intl. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 88/10315, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety), including nucleic acid sequence
 20 based amplification (NASBA) and 3SR. In NASBA, the nucleic acids can be prepared for amplification by standard phenol/chloroform extraction, heat denaturation of a sample, treatment with lysis buffer and minispin columns for isolation of DNA and RNA or guanidinium chloride extraction of RNA. These amplification techniques involve annealing a primer that has sequences specific to the target sequence. Following
 25 polymerization, DNA/RNA hybrids are digested with RNase H while double stranded DNA molecules are heat-denatured again. In either case the single stranded DNA is made fully double stranded by addition of second target-specific primer, followed by polymerization. The double stranded DNA molecules are then multiply transcribed by a polymerase such as T7 or SP6. In an isothermal cyclic reaction, the RNAs are reverse

transcribed into DNA, and transcribed once again with a polymerase such as T7 or SP6. The resulting products, whether truncated or complete, indicate target-specific sequences.

Eur. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. 329,822, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, disclose a nucleic acid amplification process involving cyclically synthesizing
 5 single-stranded RNA ("ssRNA"), ssDNA, and double-stranded DNA (dsDNA), which may be used in accordance with the present invention. The ssRNA is a first template for a first primer oligonucleotide, which is elongated by reverse transcriptase (RNA-dependent DNA polymerase). The RNA is then removed from resulting DNA:RNA duplex by the action of
 10 ribonuclease H (RNase H, an RNase specific for RNA in a duplex with either DNA or RNA). The resultant ssDNA is a second template for a second primer, which also includes the sequences of an RNA polymerase promoter (exemplified by T7 RNA polymerase) 5' to its homology to its template. This primer is then extended by DNA polymerase (exemplified by the large "Klenow" fragment of *E. coli* DNA polymerase I), resulting as a
 15 double-stranded DNA ("dsDNA") molecule, having a sequence identical to that of the original RNA between the primers and having additionally, at one end, a promoter sequence. This promoter sequence can be used by the appropriate RNA polymerase to make many RNA copies of the DNA. These copies can then re-enter the cycle leading to very swift amplification. With proper choice of enzymes, this amplification can be done isothermally without addition of enzymes at each cycle. Because of the cyclical nature of
 20 this process, the starting sequence can be chosen to be in the form of either DNA or RNA.

PCT Intl. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 89/06700, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety, disclose a nucleic acid sequence amplification scheme based on the hybridization of a promoter/primer sequence to a target single-stranded DNA ("ssDNA") followed by transcription of many RNA copies of the sequence. This scheme is not cyclic;
 25 *i.e.* new templates are not produced from the resultant RNA transcripts. Other amplification methods include "RACE" (Frohman, 1990), and "one-sided PCR" (Ohara, 1989) which are well-known to those of skill in the art.

Methods based on ligation of two (or more) oligonucleotides in the presence of nucleic acid having the sequence of the resulting "di-oligonucleotide", thereby

amplifying the di-oligonucleotide (Wu and Dean, 1996, incorporated herein by reference in its entirety), may also be used in the amplification of DNA sequences of the present invention.

BIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENTS

5 Modification and changes may be made in the structure of the polynucleotides and polypeptides of the present invention and still obtain a functional molecule that encodes a polypeptide with desirable characteristics. As mentioned above, it is often desirable to introduce one or more mutations into a specific polynucleotide sequence. In certain circumstances, the resulting encoded polypeptide sequence is altered
10 by this mutation, or in other cases, the sequence of the polypeptide is unchanged by one or more mutations in the encoding polynucleotide.

 When it is desirable to alter the amino acid sequence of a polypeptide to create an equivalent, or even an improved, second-generation molecule, the amino acid changes may be achieved by changing one or more of the codons of the encoding DNA
15 sequence, according to Table 1.

 For example, certain amino acids may be substituted for other amino acids in a protein structure without appreciable loss of interactive binding capacity with structures such as, for example, antigen-binding regions of antibodies or binding sites on substrate molecules. Since it is the interactive capacity and nature of a protein that defines
20 that protein's biological functional activity, certain amino acid sequence substitutions can be made in a protein sequence, and, of course, its underlying DNA coding sequence, and nevertheless obtain a protein with like properties. It is thus contemplated by the inventors that various changes may be made in the peptide sequences of the disclosed compositions, or corresponding DNA sequences which encode said peptides without appreciable loss of
25 their biological utility or activity.

TABLE 1

Amino Acids			Codons						
Alanine	Ala	A	GCA	GCC	GCG	GCU			
Cysteine	Cys	C	UGC	UGU					
Aspartic acid	Asp	D	GAC	GAU					
Glutamic acid	Glu	E	GAA	GAG					
Phenylalanine	Phe	F	UUC	UUU					
Glycine	Gly	G	GGA	GGC	GGG	GGU			
Histidine	His	H	CAC	CAU					
Isoleucine	Ile	I	AUA	AUC	AUU				
Lysine	Lys	K	AAA	AAG					
Leucine	Leu	L	UUA	UUG	CUA	CUC	CUG	CUU	
Methionine	Met	M	AUG						
Asparagine	Asn	N	AAC	AAU					
Proline	Pro	P	CCA	CCC	CCG	CCU			
Glutamine	Gln	Q	CAA	CAG					
Arginine	Arg	R	AGA	AGG	CGA	CGC	CGG	CGU	
Serine	Ser	S	AGC	AGU	UCA	UCC	UCG	UCU	
Threonine	Thr	T	ACA	ACC	ACG	ACU			
Valine	Val	V	GUA	GUC	GUG	GUU			
Tryptophan	Trp	W	UGG						
Tyrosine	Tyr	Y	UAC	UAU					

In making such changes, the hydropathic index of amino acids may be considered. The importance of the hydropathic amino acid index in conferring interactive biologic function on a protein is generally understood in the art (Kyte and Doolittle, 1982, incorporated herein by reference). It is accepted that the relative hydropathic character of the amino acid contributes to the secondary structure of the resultant protein, which in turn defines the interaction of the protein with other molecules, for example, enzymes, substrates, receptors, DNA, antibodies, antigens, and the like. Each amino acid has been

assigned a hydropathic index on the basis of its hydrophobicity and charge characteristics (Kyte and Doolittle, 1982). These values are: isoleucine (+4.5); valine (+4.2); leucine (+3.8); phenylalanine (+2.8); cysteine/cystine (+2.5); methionine (+1.9); alanine (+1.8); glycine (-0.4); threonine (-0.7); serine (-0.8); tryptophan (-0.9); tyrosine (-1.3); proline (-1.6); histidine (-3.2); glutamate (-3.5); glutamine (-3.5); aspartate (-3.5); asparagine (-3.5); lysine (-3.9); and arginine (-4.5).

It is known in the art that certain amino acids may be substituted by other amino acids having a similar hydropathic index or score and still result in a protein with similar biological activity, *i.e.* still obtain a biological functionally equivalent protein. In making such changes, the substitution of amino acids whose hydropathic indices are within ± 2 is preferred, those within ± 1 are particularly preferred, and those within ± 0.5 are even more particularly preferred. It is also understood in the art that the substitution of like amino acids can be made effectively on the basis of hydrophilicity. U. S. Patent 4,554,101 (specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety), states that the greatest local average hydrophilicity of a protein, as governed by the hydrophilicity of its adjacent amino acids, correlates with a biological property of the protein.

As detailed in U. S. Patent 4,554,101, the following hydrophilicity values have been assigned to amino acid residues: arginine (+3.0); lysine (+3.0); aspartate (+3.0 \pm 1); glutamate (+3.0 \pm 1); serine (+0.3); asparagine (+0.2); glutamine (+0.2); glycine (0); threonine (-0.4); proline (-0.5 \pm 1); alanine (-0.5); histidine (-0.5); cysteine (-1.0); methionine (-1.3); valine (-1.5); leucine (-1.8); isoleucine (-1.8); tyrosine (-2.3); phenylalanine (-2.5); tryptophan (-3.4). It is understood that an amino acid can be substituted for another having a similar hydrophilicity value and still obtain a biologically equivalent, and in particular, an immunologically equivalent protein. In such changes, the substitution of amino acids whose hydrophilicity values are within ± 2 is preferred, those within ± 1 are particularly preferred, and those within ± 0.5 are even more particularly preferred.

As outlined above, amino acid substitutions are generally therefore based on the relative similarity of the amino acid side-chain substituents, for example, their

hydrophobicity, hydrophilicity, charge, size, and the like. Exemplary substitutions that take various of the foregoing characteristics into consideration are well known to those of skill in the art and include: arginine and lysine; glutamate and aspartate; serine and threonine; glutamine and asparagine; and valine, leucine and isoleucine.

- 5 In addition, any polynucleotide may be further modified to increase stability *in vivo*. Possible modifications include, but are not limited to, the addition of flanking sequences at the 5' and/or 3' ends; the use of phosphorothioate or 2' O-methyl rather than phosphodiesterase linkages in the backbone; and/or the inclusion of nontraditional bases such as inosine, queosine and wybutosine, as well as acetyl- methyl-, thio- and other
10 modified forms of adenine, cytidine, guanine, thymine and uridine.

IN VIVO POLYNUCLEOTIDE DELIVERY TECHNIQUES

- In additional embodiments, genetic constructs comprising one or more of the polynucleotides of the invention are introduced into cells *in vivo*. This may be achieved using any of a variety of well known approaches, several of which are outlined below for
15 the purpose of illustration.

1. ADENOVIRUS

- One of the preferred methods for *in vivo* delivery of one or more nucleic acid sequences involves the use of an adenovirus expression vector. "Adenovirus expression vector" is meant to include those constructs containing adenovirus sequences
20 sufficient to (a) support packaging of the construct and (b) to express a polynucleotide that has been cloned therein in a sense or antisense orientation. Of course, in the context of an antisense construct, expression does not require that the gene product be synthesized.

- The expression vector comprises a genetically engineered form of an adenovirus. Knowledge of the genetic organization of adenovirus, a 36 kb, linear, double-
25 stranded DNA virus, allows substitution of large pieces of adenoviral DNA with foreign sequences up to 7 kb (Grunhaus and Horwitz, 1992). In contrast to retrovirus, the adenoviral infection of host cells does not result in chromosomal integration because

adenoviral DNA can replicate in an episomal manner without potential genotoxicity. Also, adenoviruses are structurally stable, and no genome rearrangement has been detected after extensive amplification. Adenovirus can infect virtually all epithelial cells regardless of their cell cycle stage. So far, adenoviral infection appears to be linked only to mild disease
5 such as acute respiratory disease in humans.

Adenovirus is particularly suitable for use as a gene transfer vector because of its mid-sized genome, ease of manipulation, high titer, wide target-cell range and high infectivity. Both ends of the viral genome contain 100-200 base pair inverted repeats (ITRs), which are *cis* elements necessary for viral DNA replication and packaging. The
10 early (E) and late (L) regions of the genome contain different transcription units that are divided by the onset of viral DNA replication. The E1 region (E1A and E1B) encodes proteins responsible for the regulation of transcription of the viral genome and a few cellular genes. The expression of the E2 region (E2A and E2B) results in the synthesis of the proteins for viral DNA replication. These proteins are involved in DNA replication,
15 late gene expression and host cell shut-off (Renan, 1990). The products of the late genes, including the majority of the viral capsid proteins, are expressed only after significant processing of a single primary transcript issued by the major late promoter (MLP). The MLP, (located at 16.8 m.u.) is particularly efficient during the late phase of infection, and all the mRNA's issued from this promoter possess a 5'-tripartite leader (TPL) sequence
20 which makes them preferred mRNA's for translation.

In a current system, recombinant adenovirus is generated from homologous recombination between shuttle vector and provirus vector. Due to the possible recombination between two proviral vectors, wild-type adenovirus may be generated from this process. Therefore, it is critical to isolate a single clone of virus from an individual
25 plaque and examine its genomic structure.

Generation and propagation of the current adenovirus vectors, which are replication deficient, depend on a unique helper cell line, designated 293, which was transformed from human embryonic kidney cells by Ad5 DNA fragments and constitutively expresses E1 proteins (Graham *et al.*, 1977). Since the E3 region is

dispensable from the adenovirus genome (Jones and Shenk, 1978), the current adenovirus vectors, with the help of 293 cells, carry foreign DNA in either the E1, the D3 or both regions (Graham and Prevec, 1991). In nature, adenovirus can package approximately 105% of the wild-type genome (Ghosh-Choudhury *et al.*, 1987), providing capacity for about 2 extra kB of DNA. Combined with the approximately 5.5 kB of DNA that is replaceable in the E1 and E3 regions, the maximum capacity of the current adenovirus vector is under 7.5 kB, or about 15% of the total length of the vector. More than 80% of the adenovirus viral genome remains in the vector backbone and is the source of vector-borne cytotoxicity. Also, the replication deficiency of the E1-deleted virus is incomplete. For example, leakage of viral gene expression has been observed with the currently available vectors at high multiplicities of infection (MOI) (Mulligan, 1993).

Helper cell lines may be derived from human cells such as human embryonic kidney cells, muscle cells, hematopoietic cells or other human embryonic mesenchymal or epithelial cells. Alternatively, the helper cells may be derived from the cells of other mammalian species that are permissive for human adenovirus. Such cells include, *e.g.*, Vero cells or other monkey embryonic mesenchymal or epithelial cells. As stated above, the currently preferred helper cell line is 293.

Recently, Racher *et al.* (1995) disclosed improved methods for culturing 293 cells and propagating adenovirus. In one format, natural cell aggregates are grown by inoculating individual cells into 1 liter siliconized spinner flasks (Techne, Cambridge, UK) containing 100-200 ml of medium. Following stirring at 40 rpm, the cell viability is estimated with trypan blue. In another format, Fibra-Cel microcarriers (Bibby Sterlin, Stone, UK) (5 g/l) is employed as follows. A cell inoculum, resuspended in 5 ml of medium, is added to the carrier (50 ml) in a 250 ml Erlenmeyer flask and left stationary, with occasional agitation, for 1 to 4 h. The medium is then replaced with 50 ml of fresh medium and shaking initiated. For virus production, cells are allowed to grow to about 80% confluence, after which time the medium is replaced (to 25% of the final volume) and adenovirus added at an MOI of 0.05. Cultures are left stationary overnight, following which the volume is increased to 100% and shaking commenced for another 72 h.

Other than the requirement that the adenovirus vector be replication defective, or at least conditionally defective, the nature of the adenovirus vector is not believed to be crucial to the successful practice of the invention. The adenovirus may be of any of the 42 different known serotypes or subgroups A-F. Adenovirus type 5 of subgroup C is the preferred starting material in order to obtain a conditional replication-defective adenovirus vector for use in the present invention, since Adenovirus type 5 is a human adenovirus about which a great deal of biochemical and genetic information is known, and it has historically been used for most constructions employing adenovirus as a vector.

As stated above, the typical vector according to the present invention is replication defective and will not have an adenovirus E1 region. Thus, it will be most convenient to introduce the polynucleotide encoding the gene of interest at the position from which the E1-coding sequences have been removed. However, the position of insertion of the construct within the adenovirus sequences is not critical to the invention. The polynucleotide encoding the gene of interest may also be inserted in lieu of the deleted E3 region in E3 replacement vectors as described by Karlsson *et al.* (1986) or in the E4 region where a helper cell line or helper virus complements the E4 defect.

Adenovirus is easy to grow and manipulate and exhibits broad host range *in vitro* and *in vivo*. This group of viruses can be obtained in high titers, *e.g.*, 10^9 - 10^{11} plaque-forming units per ml, and they are highly infective. The life cycle of adenovirus does not require integration into the host cell genome. The foreign genes delivered by adenovirus vectors are episomal and, therefore, have low genotoxicity to host cells. No side effects have been reported in studies of vaccination with wild-type adenovirus (Couch *et al.*, 1963; Top *et al.*, 1971), demonstrating their safety and therapeutic potential as *in vivo* gene transfer vectors.

Adenovirus vectors have been used in eukaryotic gene expression (Levrero *et al.*, 1991; Gomez-Foix *et al.*, 1992) and vaccine development (Grunhaus and Horwitz, 1992; Graham and Prevec, 1992). Recently, animal studies suggested that recombinant adenovirus could be used for gene therapy (Stratford-Perricaudet and Perricaudet, 1991; Stratford-Perricaudet *et al.*, 1990; Rich *et al.*, 1993). Studies in administering recombinant

adenovirus to different tissues include trachea instillation (Rosenfeld *et al.*, 1991; Rosenfeld *et al.*, 1992), muscle injection (Ragot *et al.*, 1993), peripheral intravenous injections (Herz and Gerard, 1993) and stereotactic inoculation into the brain (Le Gal La Salle *et al.*, 1993).

5 2. RETROVIRUSES

The retroviruses are a group of single-stranded RNA viruses characterized by an ability to convert their RNA to double-stranded DNA in infected cells by a process of reverse-transcription (Coffin, 1990). The resulting DNA then stably integrates into cellular chromosomes as a provirus and directs synthesis of viral proteins. The integration results
10 in the retention of the viral gene sequences in the recipient cell and its descendants. The retroviral genome contains three genes, gag, pol, and env that code for capsid proteins, polymerase enzyme, and envelope components, respectively. A sequence found upstream from the gag gene contains a signal for packaging of the genome into virions. Two long terminal repeat (LTR) sequences are present at the 5' and 3' ends of the viral genome.
15 These contain strong promoter and enhancer sequences and are also required for integration in the host cell genome (Coffin, 1990).

In order to construct a retroviral vector, a nucleic acid encoding one or more oligonucleotide or polynucleotide sequences of interest is inserted into the viral genome in the place of certain viral sequences to produce a virus that is replication-defective. In order
20 to produce virions, a packaging cell line containing the gag, pol, and env genes but without the LTR and packaging components is constructed (Mann *et al.*, 1983). When a recombinant plasmid containing a cDNA, together with the retroviral LTR and packaging sequences is introduced into this cell line (by calcium phosphate precipitation for example), the packaging sequence allows the RNA transcript of the recombinant plasmid to be
25 packaged into viral particles, which are then secreted into the culture media (Nicolas and Rubenstein, 1988; Temin, 1986; Mann *et al.*, 1983). The media containing the recombinant retroviruses is then collected, optionally concentrated, and used for gene

transfer. Retroviral vectors are able to infect a broad variety of cell types. However, integration and stable expression require the division of host cells (Paskind *et al.*, 1975).

A novel approach designed to allow specific targeting of retrovirus vectors was recently developed based on the chemical modification of a retrovirus by the chemical addition of lactose residues to the viral envelope. This modification could permit the specific infection of hepatocytes *via* sialoglycoprotein receptors.

A different approach to targeting of recombinant retroviruses was designed in which biotinylated antibodies against a retroviral envelope protein and against a specific cell receptor were used. The antibodies were coupled *via* the biotin components by using streptavidin (Roux *et al.*, 1989). Using antibodies against major histocompatibility complex class I and class II antigens, they demonstrated the infection of a variety of human cells that bore those surface antigens with an ecotropic virus *in vitro* (Roux *et al.*, 1989).

3. ADENO-ASSOCIATED VIRUSES

AAV (Ridgeway, 1988; Hermonat and Muzyczka, 1984) is a parovirus, discovered as a contamination of adenoviral stocks. It is a ubiquitous virus (antibodies are present in 85% of the US human population) that has not been linked to any disease. It is also classified as a dependovirus, because its replications is dependent on the presence of a helper virus, such as adenovirus. Five serotypes have been isolated, of which AAV-2 is the best characterized. AAV has a single-stranded linear DNA that is encapsidated into capsid proteins VP1, VP2 and VP3 to form an icosahedral virion of 20 to 24 nm in diameter (Muzyczka and McLaughlin, 1988).

The AAV DNA is approximately 4.7 kilobases long. It contains two open reading frames and is flanked by two ITRs. There are two major genes in the AAV genome: *rep* and *cap*. The *rep* gene codes for proteins responsible for viral replications, whereas *cap* codes for capsid protein VP1-3. Each ITR forms a T-shaped hairpin structure. These terminal repeats are the only essential *cis* components of the AAV for chromosomal integration. Therefore, the AAV can be used as a vector with all viral coding sequences removed and replaced by the cassette of genes for delivery. Three viral

promoters have been identified and named p5, p19, and p40, according to their map position. Transcription from p5 and p19 results in production of rep proteins, and transcription from p40 produces the capsid proteins (Hermonat and Muzyczka, 1984).

There are several factors that prompted researchers to study the possibility of using rAAV as an expression vector. One is that the requirements for delivering a gene to integrate into the host chromosome are surprisingly few. It is necessary to have the 145-bp ITRs, which are only 6% of the AAV genome. This leaves room in the vector to assemble a 4.5-kb DNA insertion. While this carrying capacity may prevent the AAV from delivering large genes, it is amply suited for delivering the antisense constructs of the present invention.

AAV is also a good choice of delivery vehicles due to its safety. There is a relatively complicated rescue mechanism: not only wild type adenovirus but also AAV genes are required to mobilize rAAV. Likewise, AAV is not pathogenic and not associated with any disease. The removal of viral coding sequences minimizes immune reactions to viral gene expression, and therefore, rAAV does not evoke an inflammatory response.

4. OTHER VIRAL VECTORS AS EXPRESSION CONSTRUCTS

Other viral vectors may be employed as expression constructs in the present invention for the delivery of oligonucleotide or polynucleotide sequences to a host cell. Vectors derived from viruses such as vaccinia virus (Ridgeway, 1988; Coupar *et al.*, 1988), lentiviruses, polio viruses and herpes viruses may be employed. They offer several attractive features for various mammalian cells (Friedmann, 1989; Ridgeway, 1988; Coupar *et al.*, 1988; Horwich *et al.*, 1990).

With the recent recognition of defective hepatitis B viruses, new insight was gained into the structure-function relationship of different viral sequences. *In vitro* studies showed that the virus could retain the ability for helper-dependent packaging and reverse transcription despite the deletion of up to 80% of its genome (Horwich *et al.*, 1990). This suggested that large portions of the genome could be replaced with foreign genetic material. The hepatotropism and persistence (integration) were particularly attractive

properties for liver-directed gene transfer. Chang *et al.* (1991) introduced the chloramphenicol acetyltransferase (CAT) gene into duck hepatitis B virus genome in the place of the polymerase, surface, and pre-surface coding sequences. It was cotransfected with wild-type virus into an avian hepatoma cell line. Culture media containing high titers of the recombinant virus were used to infect primary duckling hepatocytes. Stable CAT gene expression was detected for at least 24 days after transfection (Chang *et al.*, 1991).

5. NON-VIRAL VECTORS

In order to effect expression of the oligonucleotide or polynucleotide sequences of the present invention, the expression construct must be delivered into a cell. This delivery may be accomplished *in vitro*, as in laboratory procedures for transforming cells lines, or *in vivo* or *ex vivo*, as in the treatment of certain disease states. As described above, one preferred mechanism for delivery is *via* viral infection where the expression construct is encapsulated in an infectious viral particle.

Once the expression construct has been delivered into the cell the nucleic acid encoding the desired oligonucleotide or polynucleotide sequences may be positioned and expressed at different sites. In certain embodiments, the nucleic acid encoding the construct may be stably integrated into the genome of the cell. This integration may be in the specific location and orientation *via* homologous recombination (gene replacement) or it may be integrated in a random, non-specific location (gene augmentation). In yet further embodiments, the nucleic acid may be stably maintained in the cell as a separate, episomal segment of DNA. Such nucleic acid segments or "episomes" encode sequences sufficient to permit maintenance and replication independent of or in synchronization with the host cell cycle. How the expression construct is delivered to a cell and where in the cell the nucleic acid remains is dependent on the type of expression construct employed.

In certain embodiments of the invention, the expression construct comprising one or more oligonucleotide or polynucleotide sequences may simply consist of naked recombinant DNA or plasmids. Transfer of the construct may be performed by any of the methods mentioned above which physically or chemically permeabilize the cell

membrane. This is particularly applicable for transfer *in vitro* but it may be applied to *in vivo* use as well. Dubensky *et al.* (1984) successfully injected polyomavirus DNA in the form of calcium phosphate precipitates into liver and spleen of adult and newborn mice demonstrating active viral replication and acute infection. Benvenisty and Reshef (1986) also demonstrated that direct intraperitoneal injection of calcium phosphate-precipitated plasmids results in expression of the transfected genes. It is envisioned that DNA encoding a gene of interest may also be transferred in a similar manner *in vivo* and express the gene product.

Another embodiment of the invention for transferring a naked DNA expression construct into cells may involve particle bombardment. This method depends on the ability to accelerate DNA-coated microprojectiles to a high velocity allowing them to pierce cell membranes and enter cells without killing them (Klein *et al.*, 1987). Several devices for accelerating small particles have been developed. One such device relies on a high voltage discharge to generate an electrical current, which in turn provides the motive force (Yang *et al.*, 1990). The microprojectiles used have consisted of biologically inert substances such as tungsten or gold beads.

Selected organs including the liver, skin, and muscle tissue of rats and mice have been bombarded *in vivo* (Yang *et al.*, 1990; Zelenin *et al.*, 1991). This may require surgical exposure of the tissue or cells, to eliminate any intervening tissue between the gun and the target organ, *i.e. ex vivo* treatment. Again, DNA encoding a particular gene may be delivered *via* this method and still be incorporated by the present invention.

ANTISENSE OLIGONUCLEOTIDES

The end result of the flow of genetic information is the synthesis of protein. DNA is transcribed by polymerases into messenger RNA and translated on the ribosome to yield a folded, functional protein. Thus there are several steps along the route where protein synthesis can be inhibited. The native DNA segment coding for a polypeptide described herein, as all such mammalian DNA strands, has two strands: a sense strand and an antisense strand held together by hydrogen bonding. The messenger RNA coding for

polypeptide has the same nucleotide sequence as the sense DNA strand except that the DNA thymidine is replaced by uridine. Thus, synthetic antisense nucleotide sequences will bind to a mRNA and inhibit expression of the protein encoded by that mRNA.

The targeting of antisense oligonucleotides to mRNA is thus one mechanism to shut down protein synthesis, and, consequently, represents a powerful and targeted therapeutic approach. For example, the synthesis of polygalacturonase and the muscarine type 2 acetylcholine receptor are inhibited by antisense oligonucleotides directed to their respective mRNA sequences (U. S. Patent 5,739,119 and U. S. Patent 5,759,829, each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). Further, examples of antisense inhibition have been demonstrated with the nuclear protein cyclin, the multiple drug resistance gene (MDG1), ICAM-1, E-selectin, STK-1, striatal GABA_A receptor and human EGF (Jaskulski *et al.*, 1988; Vasanthakumar and Ahmed, 1989; Peris *et al.*, 1998; U. S. Patent 5,801,154; U. S. Patent 5,789,573; U. S. Patent 5,718,709 and U. S. Patent 5,610,288, each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). Antisense constructs have also been described that inhibit and can be used to treat a variety of abnormal cellular proliferations, *e.g.* cancer (U. S. Patent 5,747,470; U. S. Patent 5,591,317 and U. S. Patent 5,783,683, each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety).

Therefore, in exemplary embodiments, the invention provides oligonucleotide sequences that comprise all, or a portion of, any sequence that is capable of specifically binding to polynucleotide sequence described herein, or a complement thereof. In one embodiment, the antisense oligonucleotides comprise DNA or derivatives thereof. In another embodiment, the oligonucleotides comprise RNA or derivatives thereof. In a third embodiment, the oligonucleotides are modified DNAs comprising a phosphorothioated modified backbone. In a fourth embodiment, the oligonucleotide sequences comprise peptide nucleic acids or derivatives thereof. In each case, preferred compositions comprise a sequence region that is complementary, and more preferably substantially-complementary, and even more preferably, completely complementary to one or more portions of polynucleotides disclosed herein.

Selection of antisense compositions specific for a given gene sequence is based upon analysis of the chosen target sequence (*i.e.* in these illustrative examples the rat and human sequences) and determination of secondary structure, T_m , binding energy, relative stability, and antisense compositions were selected based upon their relative inability to form dimers, hairpins, or other secondary structures that would reduce or prohibit specific binding to the target mRNA in a host cell.

Highly preferred target regions of the mRNA, are those which are at or near the AUG translation initiation codon, and those sequences which were substantially complementary to 5' regions of the mRNA. These secondary structure analyses and target site selection considerations were performed using v.4 of the OLIGO primer analysis software (Rychlik, 1997) and the BLASTN 2.0.5 algorithm software (Altschul *et al.*, 1997).

The use of an antisense delivery method employing a short peptide vector, termed MPG (27 residues), is also contemplated. The MPG peptide contains a hydrophobic domain derived from the fusion sequence of HIV gp41 and a hydrophilic domain from the nuclear localization sequence of SV40 T-antigen (Morris *et al.*, 1997). It has been demonstrated that several molecules of the MPG peptide coat the antisense oligonucleotides and can be delivered into cultured mammalian cells in less than 1 hour with relatively high efficiency (90%). Further, the interaction with MPG strongly increases both the stability of the oligonucleotide to nuclease and the ability to cross the plasma membrane (Morris *et al.*, 1997).

RIBOZYMES

Although proteins traditionally have been used for catalysis of nucleic acids, another class of macromolecules has emerged as useful in this endeavor. Ribozymes are RNA-protein complexes that cleave nucleic acids in a site-specific fashion. Ribozymes have specific catalytic domains that possess endonuclease activity (Kim and Cech, 1987; Gerlach *et al.*, 1987; Forster and Symons, 1987). For example, a large number of ribozymes accelerate phosphoester transfer reactions with a high degree of specificity, often cleaving only one of several phosphoesters in an oligonucleotide substrate (Cech *et*

al., 1981; Michel and Westhof, 1990; Reinhold-Hurek and Shub, 1992). This specificity has been attributed to the requirement that the substrate bind via specific base-pairing interactions to the internal guide sequence ("IGS") of the ribozyme prior to chemical reaction.

5 Ribozyme catalysis has primarily been observed as part of sequence-specific cleavage/ligation reactions involving nucleic acids (Joyce, 1989; Cech *et al.*, 1981). For example, U. S. Patent No. 5,354,855 (specifically incorporated herein by reference) reports that certain ribozymes can act as endonucleases with a sequence specificity greater than that of known ribonucleases and approaching that of the DNA restriction enzymes. Thus, 10 sequence-specific ribozyme-mediated inhibition of gene expression may be particularly suited to therapeutic applications (Scanlon *et al.*, 1991; Sarver *et al.*, 1990). Recently, it was reported that ribozymes elicited genetic changes in some cells lines to which they were applied; the altered genes included the oncogenes H-*ras*, c-*fos* and genes of HIV. Most of this work involved the modification of a target mRNA, based on a specific mutant codon 15 that is cleaved by a specific ribozyme.

 Six basic varieties of naturally-occurring enzymatic RNAs are known presently. Each can catalyze the hydrolysis of RNA phosphodiester bonds *in trans* (and thus can cleave other RNA molecules) under physiological conditions. In general, enzymatic nucleic acids act by first binding to a target RNA. Such binding occurs through 20 the target binding portion of a enzymatic nucleic acid which is held in close proximity to an enzymatic portion of the molecule that acts to cleave the target RNA. Thus, the enzymatic nucleic acid first recognizes and then binds a target RNA through complementary base-pairing, and once bound to the correct site, acts enzymatically to cut the target RNA. Strategic cleavage of such a target RNA will destroy its ability to direct synthesis of an 25 encoded protein. After an enzymatic nucleic acid has bound and cleaved its RNA target, it is released from that RNA to search for another target and can repeatedly bind and cleave new targets.

 The enzymatic nature of a ribozyme is advantageous over many technologies, such as antisense technology (where a nucleic acid molecule simply binds to

a nucleic acid target to block its translation) since the concentration of ribozyme necessary to affect a therapeutic treatment is lower than that of an antisense oligonucleotide. This advantage reflects the ability of the ribozyme to act enzymatically. Thus, a single ribozyme molecule is able to cleave many molecules of target RNA. In addition, the
 5 ribozyme is a highly specific inhibitor, with the specificity of inhibition depending not only on the base pairing mechanism of binding to the target RNA, but also on the mechanism of target RNA cleavage. Single mismatches, or base-substitutions, near the site of cleavage can completely eliminate catalytic activity of a ribozyme. Similar mismatches in antisense molecules do not prevent their action (Woolf *et al.*, 1992). Thus, the specificity of action
 10 of a ribozyme is greater than that of an antisense oligonucleotide binding the same RNA site.

The enzymatic nucleic acid molecule may be formed in a hammerhead, hairpin, a hepatitis δ virus, group I intron or RNaseP RNA (in association with an RNA guide sequence) or Neurospora VS RNA motif. Examples of hammerhead motifs are
 15 described by Rossi *et al.* (1992). Examples of hairpin motifs are described by Hampel *et al.* (Eur. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. EP 0360257), Hampel and Tritz (1989), Hampel *et al.* (1990) and U. S. Patent 5,631,359 (specifically incorporated herein by reference). An example of the hepatitis δ virus motif is described by Perrotta and Been (1992); an example of the RNaseP motif is described by Guerrier-Takada *et al.* (1983); Neurospora VS RNA
 20 ribozyme motif is described by Collins (Saville and Collins, 1990; Saville and Collins, 1991; Collins and Olive, 1993); and an example of the Group I intron is described in (U. S. Patent 4,987,071, specifically incorporated herein by reference). All that is important in an enzymatic nucleic acid molecule of this invention is that it has a specific substrate binding site which is complementary to one or more of the target gene RNA regions, and that it
 25 have nucleotide sequences within or surrounding that substrate binding site which impart an RNA cleaving activity to the molecule. Thus the ribozyme constructs need not be limited to specific motifs mentioned herein.

In certain embodiments, it may be important to produce enzymatic cleaving agents which exhibit a high degree of specificity for the RNA of a desired target, such as

one of the sequences disclosed herein. The enzymatic nucleic acid molecule is preferably targeted to a highly conserved sequence region of a target mRNA. Such enzymatic nucleic acid molecules can be delivered exogenously to specific cells as required. Alternatively, the ribozymes can be expressed from DNA or RNA vectors that are delivered to specific
 5 cells.

Small enzymatic nucleic acid motifs (*e.g.*, of the hammerhead or the hairpin structure) may also be used for exogenous delivery. The simple structure of these molecules increases the ability of the enzymatic nucleic acid to invade targeted regions of the mRNA structure. Alternatively, catalytic RNA molecules can be expressed within cells
 10 from eukaryotic promoters (*e.g.*, Scanlon *et al.*, 1991; Kashani-Sabet *et al.*, 1992; Dropulic *et al.*, 1992; Weerasinghe *et al.*, 1991; Ojwang *et al.*, 1992; Chen *et al.*, 1992; Sarver *et al.*, 1990). Those skilled in the art realize that any ribozyme can be expressed in eukaryotic cells from the appropriate DNA vector. The activity of such ribozymes can be augmented by their release from the primary transcript by a second ribozyme (Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No.
 15 WO 93/23569, and Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 94/02595, both hereby incorporated by reference; Ohkawa *et al.*, 1992; Taira *et al.*, 1991; and Ventura *et al.*, 1993).

Ribozymes may be added directly, or can be complexed with cationic lipids, lipid complexes, packaged within liposomes, or otherwise delivered to target cells. The RNA or RNA complexes can be locally administered to relevant tissues *ex vivo*, or *in vivo*
 20 through injection, aerosol inhalation, infusion pump or stent, with or without their incorporation in biopolymers.

Ribozymes may be designed as described in Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 93/23569 and Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 94/02595, each specifically incorporated herein by reference) and synthesized to be tested *in vitro* and *in vivo*, as described. Such
 25 ribozymes can also be optimized for delivery. While specific examples are provided, those in the art will recognize that equivalent RNA targets in other species can be utilized when necessary.

Hammerhead or hairpin ribozymes may be individually analyzed by computer folding (Jaeger *et al.*, 1989) to assess whether the ribozyme sequences fold into

the appropriate secondary structure. Those ribozymes with unfavorable intramolecular interactions between the binding arms and the catalytic core are eliminated from consideration. Varying binding arm lengths can be chosen to optimize activity. Generally, at least 5 or so bases on each arm are able to bind to, or otherwise interact with, the target RNA.

Ribozymes of the hammerhead or hairpin motif may be designed to anneal to various sites in the mRNA message, and can be chemically synthesized. The method of synthesis used follows the procedure for normal RNA synthesis as described in Usman *et al.* (1987) and in Scaringe *et al.* (1990) and makes use of common nucleic acid protecting and coupling groups, such as dimethoxytrityl at the 5'-end, and phosphoramidites at the 3'-end. Average stepwise coupling yields are typically >98%. Hairpin ribozymes may be synthesized in two parts and annealed to reconstruct an active ribozyme (Chowrira and Burke, 1992). Ribozymes may be modified extensively to enhance stability by modification with nuclease resistant groups, for example, 2'-amino, 2'-C-allyl, 2'-fluoro, 2'-o-methyl, 2'-H (for a review see *e.g.*, Usman and Cedergren, 1992). Ribozymes may be purified by gel electrophoresis using general methods or by high pressure liquid chromatography and resuspended in water.

Ribozyme activity can be optimized by altering the length of the ribozyme binding arms, or chemically synthesizing ribozymes with modifications that prevent their degradation by serum ribonucleases (see *e.g.*, Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 92/07065; Perrault *et al.*, 1990; Pieken *et al.*, 1991; Usman and Cedergren, 1992; Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 93/15187; Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 91/03162; Eur. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. 92110298.4; U. S. Patent 5,334,711; and Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 94/13688, which describe various chemical modifications that can be made to the sugar moieties of enzymatic RNA molecules), modifications which enhance their efficacy in cells, and removal of stem II bases to shorten RNA synthesis times and reduce chemical requirements.

Sullivan *et al.* (Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 94/02595) describes the general methods for delivery of enzymatic RNA molecules. Ribozymes may be

administered to cells by a variety of methods known to those familiar to the art, including, but not restricted to, encapsulation in liposomes, by iontophoresis, or by incorporation into other vehicles, such as hydrogels, cyclodextrins, biodegradable nanocapsules, and bioadhesive microspheres. For some indications, ribozymes may be directly delivered *ex vivo* to cells or tissues with or without the aforementioned vehicles. Alternatively, the RNA/vehicle combination may be locally delivered by direct inhalation, by direct injection or by use of a catheter, infusion pump or stent. Other routes of delivery include, but are not limited to, intravascular, intramuscular, subcutaneous or joint injection, aerosol inhalation, oral (tablet or pill form), topical, systemic, ocular, intraperitoneal and/or intrathecal delivery. More detailed descriptions of ribozyme delivery and administration are provided in Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 94/02595 and Int. Pat. Appl. Publ. No. WO 93/23569, each specifically incorporated herein by reference.

Another means of accumulating high concentrations of a ribozyme(s) within cells is to incorporate the ribozyme-encoding sequences into a DNA expression vector. Transcription of the ribozyme sequences are driven from a promoter for eukaryotic RNA polymerase I (pol I), RNA polymerase II (pol II), or RNA polymerase III (pol III). Transcripts from pol II or pol III promoters will be expressed at high levels in all cells; the levels of a given pol II promoter in a given cell type will depend on the nature of the gene regulatory sequences (enhancers, silencers, *etc.*) present nearby. Prokaryotic RNA polymerase promoters may also be used, providing that the prokaryotic RNA polymerase enzyme is expressed in the appropriate cells (Elroy-Stein and Moss, 1990; Gao and Huang, 1993; Lieber *et al.*, 1993; Zhou *et al.*, 1990). Ribozymes expressed from such promoters can function in mammalian cells (*e.g.* Kashani-Saber *et al.*, 1992; Ojwang *et al.*, 1992; Chen *et al.*, 1992; Yu *et al.*, 1993; L'Huillier *et al.*, 1992; Lisiewicz *et al.*, 1993). Such transcription units can be incorporated into a variety of vectors for introduction into mammalian cells, including but not restricted to, plasmid DNA vectors, viral DNA vectors (such as adenovirus or adeno-associated vectors), or viral RNA vectors (such as retroviral, semliki forest virus, sindbis virus vectors).

Ribozymes may be used as diagnostic tools to examine genetic drift and mutations within diseased cells. They can also be used to assess levels of the target RNA molecule. The close relationship between ribozyme activity and the structure of the target RNA allows the detection of mutations in any region of the molecule which alters the base-pairing and three-dimensional structure of the target RNA. By using multiple ribozymes, one may map nucleotide changes which are important to RNA structure and function *in vitro*, as well as in cells and tissues. Cleavage of target RNAs with ribozymes may be used to inhibit gene expression and define the role (essentially) of specified gene products in the progression of disease. In this manner, other genetic targets may be defined as important mediators of the disease. These studies will lead to better treatment of the disease progression by affording the possibility of combinational therapies (e.g., multiple ribozymes targeted to different genes, ribozymes coupled with known small molecule inhibitors, or intermittent treatment with combinations of ribozymes and/or other chemical or biological molecules). Other *in vitro* uses of ribozymes are well known in the art, and include detection of the presence of mRNA associated with an IL-5 related condition. Such RNA is detected by determining the presence of a cleavage product after treatment with a ribozyme using standard methodology.

PEPTIDE NUCLEIC ACIDS

In certain embodiments, the inventors contemplate the use of peptide nucleic acids (PNAs) in the practice of the methods of the invention. PNA is a DNA mimic in which the nucleobases are attached to a pseudopeptide backbone (Good and Nielsen, 1997). PNA is able to be utilized in a number methods that traditionally have used RNA or DNA. Often PNA sequences perform better in techniques than the corresponding RNA or DNA sequences and have utilities that are not inherent to RNA or DNA. A review of PNA including methods of making, characteristics of, and methods of using, is provided by Corey (1997) and is incorporated herein by reference. As such, in certain embodiments, one may prepare PNA sequences that are complementary to one or more portions of the ACE mRNA sequence, and such PNA compositions may be used to regulate, alter,

decrease, or reduce the translation of ACE-specific mRNA, and thereby alter the level of ACE activity in a host cell to which such PNA compositions have been administered.

PNAs have 2-aminoethyl-glycine linkages replacing the normal phosphodiester backbone of DNA (Nielsen *et al.*, 1991; Hanvey *et al.*, 1992; Hyrup and Nielsen, 1996; Neilsen, 1996). This chemistry has three important consequences: firstly, in contrast to DNA or phosphorothioate oligonucleotides, PNAs are neutral molecules; secondly, PNAs are achiral, which avoids the need to develop a stereoselective synthesis; and thirdly, PNA synthesis uses standard Boc (Dueholm *et al.*, 1994) or Fmoc (Thomson *et al.*, 1995) protocols for solid-phase peptide synthesis, although other methods, including a modified Merrifield method, have been used (Christensen *et al.*, 1995).

PNA monomers or ready-made oligomers are commercially available from PerSeptive Biosystems (Framingham, MA). PNA syntheses by either Boc or Fmoc protocols are straightforward using manual or automated protocols (Norton *et al.*, 1995). The manual protocol lends itself to the production of chemically modified PNAs or the simultaneous synthesis of families of closely related PNAs.

As with peptide synthesis, the success of a particular PNA synthesis will depend on the properties of the chosen sequence. For example, while in theory PNAs can incorporate any combination of nucleotide bases, the presence of adjacent purines can lead to deletions of one or more residues in the product. In expectation of this difficulty, it is suggested that, in producing PNAs with adjacent purines, one should repeat the coupling of residues likely to be added inefficiently. This should be followed by the purification of PNAs by reverse-phase high-pressure liquid chromatography (Norton *et al.*, 1995) providing yields and purity of product similar to those observed during the synthesis of peptides.

Modifications of PNAs for a given application may be accomplished by coupling amino acids during solid-phase synthesis or by attaching compounds that contain a carboxylic acid group to the exposed N-terminal amine. Alternatively, PNAs can be modified after synthesis by coupling to an introduced lysine or cysteine. The ease with which PNAs can be modified facilitates optimization for better solubility or for specific

functional requirements. Once synthesized, the identity of PNAs and their derivatives can be confirmed by mass spectrometry. Several studies have made and utilized modifications of PNAs (Norton *et al.*, 1995; Haaime *et al.*, 1996; Stetsenko *et al.*, 1996; Petersen *et al.*, 1995; Ulmann *et al.*, 1996; Koch *et al.*, 1995; Orum *et al.*, 1995; Footer *et al.*, 1996; Griffith *et al.*, 1995; Kremsky *et al.*, 1996; Pardridge *et al.*, 1995; Boffa *et al.*, 1995; Landsdorp *et al.*, 1996; Gambacorti-Passerini *et al.*, 1996; Armitage *et al.*, 1997; Seeger *et al.*, 1997; Ruskowski *et al.*, 1997). U.S. Patent No. 5,700,922 discusses PNA-DNA-PNA chimeric molecules and their uses in diagnostics, modulating protein in organisms, and treatment of conditions susceptible to therapeutics.

10 In contrast to DNA and RNA, which contain negatively charged linkages, the PNA backbone is neutral. In spite of this dramatic alteration, PNAs recognize complementary DNA and RNA by Watson-Crick pairing (Egholm *et al.*, 1993), validating the initial modeling by Nielsen *et al.* (1991). PNAs lack 3' to 5' polarity and can bind in either parallel or antiparallel fashion, with the antiparallel mode being preferred (Egholm *et al.*, 1993).

15 Hybridization of DNA oligonucleotides to DNA and RNA is destabilized by electrostatic repulsion between the negatively charged phosphate backbones of the complementary strands. By contrast, the absence of charge repulsion in PNA-DNA or PNA-RNA duplexes increases the melting temperature (T_m) and reduces the dependence of T_m on the concentration of mono- or divalent cations (Nielsen *et al.*, 1991). The enhanced rate and affinity of hybridization are significant because they are responsible for the surprising ability of PNAs to perform strand invasion of complementary sequences within relaxed double-stranded DNA. In addition, the efficient hybridization at inverted repeats suggests that PNAs can recognize secondary structure effectively within double-stranded DNA. Enhanced recognition also occurs with PNAs immobilized on surfaces, and Wang *et al.* have shown that support-bound PNAs can be used to detect hybridization events (Wang *et al.*, 1996).

25 One might expect that tight binding of PNAs to complementary sequences would also increase binding to similar (but not identical) sequences, reducing the sequence

specificity of PNA recognition. As with DNA hybridization, however, selective recognition can be achieved by balancing oligomer length and incubation temperature. Moreover, selective hybridization of PNAs is encouraged by PNA-DNA hybridization being less tolerant of base mismatches than DNA-DNA hybridization. For example, a single mismatch within a 16 bp PNA-DNA duplex can reduce the T_m by up to 15°C (Egholm *et al.*, 1993). This high level of discrimination has allowed the development of several PNA-based strategies for the analysis of point mutations (Wang *et al.*, 1996; Carlsson *et al.*, 1996; Thiede *et al.*, 1996; Webb and Hurskainen, 1996; Perry-O'Keefe *et al.*, 1996).

High-affinity binding provides clear advantages for molecular recognition and the development of new applications for PNAs. For example, 11-13 nucleotide PNAs inhibit the activity of telomerase, a ribonucleo-protein that extends telomere ends using an essential RNA template, while the analogous DNA oligomers do not (Norton *et al.*, 1996).

Neutral PNAs are more hydrophobic than analogous DNA oligomers, and this can lead to difficulty solubilizing them at neutral pH, especially if the PNAs have a high purine content or if they have the potential to form secondary structures. Their solubility can be enhanced by attaching one or more positive charges to the PNA termini (Nielsen *et al.*, 1991).

Findings by Allfrey and colleagues suggest that strand invasion will occur spontaneously at sequences within chromosomal DNA (Boffa *et al.*, 1995; Boffa *et al.*, 1996). These studies targeted PNAs to triplet repeats of the nucleotides CAG and used this recognition to purify transcriptionally active DNA (Boffa *et al.*, 1995) and to inhibit transcription (Boffa *et al.*, 1996). This result suggests that if PNAs can be delivered within cells then they will have the potential to be general sequence-specific regulators of gene expression. Studies and reviews concerning the use of PNAs as antisense and anti-gene agents include Nielsen *et al.* (1993b), Hanvey *et al.* (1992), and Good and Nielsen (1997). Koppelhus *et al.* (1997) have used PNAs to inhibit HIV-1 inverse transcription, showing that PNAs may be used for antiviral therapies.

Methods of characterizing the antisense binding properties of PNAs are discussed in Rose (1993) and Jensen *et al.* (1997). Rose uses capillary gel electrophoresis to determine binding of PNAs to their complementary oligonucleotide, measuring the relative binding kinetics and stoichiometry. Similar types of measurements were made by
 5 Jensen *et al.* using BIAcore™ technology.

Other applications of PNAs include use in DNA strand invasion (Nielsen *et al.*, 1991), antisense inhibition (Hanvey *et al.*, 1992), mutational analysis (Orum *et al.*, 1993), enhancers of transcription (Mollegaard *et al.*, 1994), nucleic acid purification (Orum *et al.*, 1995), isolation of transcriptionally active genes (Boffa *et al.*, 1995), blocking of
 10 transcription factor binding (Vickers *et al.*, 1995), genome cleavage (Veselkov *et al.*, 1996), biosensors (Wang *et al.*, 1996), *in situ* hybridization (Thisted *et al.*, 1996), and in a alternative to Southern blotting (Perry-O'Keefe, 1996).

POLYPEPTIDE COMPOSITIONS

The present invention, in other aspects, provides polypeptide compositions.
 15 Generally, a polypeptide of the invention will be an isolated polypeptide (or an epitope, variant, or active fragment thereof) derived from a mammalian species. Preferably, the polypeptide is encoded by a polynucleotide sequence disclosed herein or a sequence which hybridizes under moderately stringent conditions to a polynucleotide sequence disclosed herein. Alternatively, the polypeptide may be defined as a polypeptide which comprises a
 20 contiguous amino acid sequence from an amino acid sequence disclosed herein, or which polypeptide comprises an entire amino acid sequence disclosed herein.

In the present invention, a polypeptide composition is also understood to comprise one or more polypeptides that are immunologically reactive with antibodies generated against a polypeptide of the invention, particularly a polypeptide having the
 25 amino acid sequence disclosed in SEQ ID NO: 299, 300, 304-306, 308-312 and 314, or to active fragments, or to variants or biological functional equivalents thereof.

Likewise, a polypeptide composition of the present invention is understood to comprise one or more polypeptides that are capable of eliciting antibodies that are

immunologically reactive with one or more polypeptides encoded by one or more contiguous nucleic acid sequences contained in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317, or to active fragments, or to variants thereof, or to one or more nucleic acid sequences which hybridize to one or more of these sequences under conditions of moderate to high stringency. Particularly illustrative polypeptides include the amino acid sequence disclosed in SEQ ID NO: 299, 300, 304-306, 308-312 and 314.

As used herein, an active fragment of a polypeptide includes a whole or a portion of a polypeptide which is modified by conventional techniques, *e.g.*, mutagenesis, or by addition, deletion, or substitution, but which active fragment exhibits substantially the same structure function, antigenicity, etc., as a polypeptide as described herein.

In certain illustrative embodiments, the polypeptides of the invention will comprise at least an immunogenic portion of a breast tumor protein or a variant thereof, as described herein. As noted above, a "breast tumor protein" is a protein that is expressed by breast tumor cells. Proteins that are breast tumor proteins also react detectably within an immunoassay (such as an ELISA) with antisera from a patient with breast cancer. Polypeptides as described herein may be of any length. Additional sequences derived from the native protein and/or heterologous sequences may be present, and such sequences may (but need not) possess further immunogenic or antigenic properties.

An "immunogenic portion," as used herein is a portion of a protein that is recognized (*i.e.*, specifically bound) by a B-cell and/or T-cell surface antigen receptor. Such immunogenic portions generally comprise at least 5 amino acid residues, more preferably at least 10, and still more preferably at least 20 amino acid residues of a breast tumor protein or a variant thereof. Certain preferred immunogenic portions include peptides in which an N-terminal leader sequence and/or transmembrane domain have been deleted. Other preferred immunogenic portions may contain a small N- and/or C-terminal deletion (*e.g.*, 1-30 amino acids, preferably 5-15 amino acids), relative to the mature protein.

Immunogenic portions may generally be identified using well known techniques, such as those summarized in Paul, *Fundamental Immunology*, 3rd ed., 243-247

(Raven Press, 1993) and references cited therein. Such techniques include screening polypeptides for the ability to react with antigen-specific antibodies, antisera and/or T-cell lines or clones. As used herein, antisera and antibodies are "antigen-specific" if they specifically bind to an antigen (*i.e.*, they react with the protein in an ELISA or other immunoassay, and do not react detectably with unrelated proteins). Such antisera and antibodies may be prepared as described herein, and using well known techniques. An immunogenic portion of a native breast tumor protein is a portion that reacts with such antisera and/or T-cells at a level that is not substantially less than the reactivity of the full length polypeptide (*e.g.*, in an ELISA and/or T-cell reactivity assay). Such immunogenic portions may react within such assays at a level that is similar to or greater than the reactivity of the full length polypeptide. Such screens may generally be performed using methods well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, such as those described in Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. For example, a polypeptide may be immobilized on a solid support and contacted with patient sera to allow binding of antibodies within the sera to the immobilized polypeptide. Unbound sera may then be removed and bound antibodies detected using, for example, ¹²⁵I-labeled Protein A.

As noted above, a composition may comprise a variant of a native breast tumor protein. A polypeptide "variant," as used herein, is a polypeptide that differs from a native breast tumor protein in one or more substitutions, deletions, additions and/or insertions, such that the immunogenicity of the polypeptide is not substantially diminished. In other words, the ability of a variant to react with antigen-specific antisera may be enhanced or unchanged, relative to the native protein, or may be diminished by less than 50%, and preferably less than 20%, relative to the native protein. Such variants may generally be identified by modifying one of the above polypeptide sequences and evaluating the reactivity of the modified polypeptide with antigen-specific antibodies or antisera as described herein. Preferred variants include those in which one or more portions, such as an N-terminal leader sequence or transmembrane domain, have been removed. Other preferred variants include variants in which a small portion (*e.g.*, 1-30

amino acids, preferably 5-15 amino acids) has been removed from the N- and/or C-terminal of the mature protein.

Polypeptide variants encompassed by the present invention include those exhibiting at least about 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 91%, 92%, 93%, 94%, 95%, 96%,
 5 97%, 98%, or 99% or more identity (determined as described above) to the polypeptides disclosed herein.

Preferably, a variant contains conservative substitutions. A "conservative substitution" is one in which an amino acid is substituted for another amino acid that has similar properties, such that one skilled in the art of peptide chemistry would expect the
 10 secondary structure and hydropathic nature of the polypeptide to be substantially unchanged. Amino acid substitutions may generally be made on the basis of similarity in polarity, charge, solubility, hydrophobicity, hydrophilicity and/or the amphipathic nature of the residues. For example, negatively charged amino acids include aspartic acid and glutamic acid; positively charged amino acids include lysine and arginine; and amino acids
 15 with uncharged polar head groups having similar hydrophilicity values include leucine, isoleucine and valine; glycine and alanine; asparagine and glutamine; and serine, threonine, phenylalanine and tyrosine. Other groups of amino acids that may represent conservative changes include: (1) ala, pro, gly, glu, asp, gln, asn, ser, thr; (2) cys, ser, tyr, thr; (3) val, ile, leu, met, ala, phe; (4) lys, arg, his; and (5) phe, tyr, trp, his. A variant may also, or
 20 alternatively, contain nonconservative changes. In a preferred embodiment, variant polypeptides differ from a native sequence by substitution, deletion or addition of five amino acids or fewer. Variants may also (or alternatively) be modified by, for example, the deletion or addition of amino acids that have minimal influence on the immunogenicity, secondary structure and hydropathic nature of the polypeptide.

25 As noted above, polypeptides may comprise a signal (or leader) sequence at the N-terminal end of the protein, which co-translationally or post-translationally directs transfer of the protein. The polypeptide may also be conjugated to a linker or other sequence for ease of synthesis, purification or identification of the polypeptide (e.g., poly-

His), or to enhance binding of the polypeptide to a solid support. For example, a polypeptide may be conjugated to an immunoglobulin Fc region.

Polypeptides may be prepared using any of a variety of well known techniques. Recombinant polypeptides encoded by DNA sequences as described above
5 may be readily prepared from the DNA sequences using any of a variety of expression vectors known to those of ordinary skill in the art. Expression may be achieved in any appropriate host cell that has been transformed or transfected with an expression vector containing a DNA molecule that encodes a recombinant polypeptide. Suitable host cells include prokaryotes, yeast, and higher eukaryotic cells, such as mammalian cells and plant
10 cells. Preferably, the host cells employed are *E. coli*, yeast or a mammalian cell line such as COS or CHO. Supernatants from suitable host/vector systems which secrete recombinant protein or polypeptide into culture media may be first concentrated using a commercially available filter. Following concentration, the concentrate may be applied to a suitable purification matrix such as an affinity matrix or an ion exchange resin. Finally,
15 one or more reverse phase HPLC steps can be employed to further purify a recombinant polypeptide.

Portions and other variants having less than about 100 amino acids, and generally less than about 50 amino acids, may also be generated by synthetic means, using techniques well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, such polypeptides
20 may be synthesized using any of the commercially available solid-phase techniques, such as the Merrifield solid-phase synthesis method, where amino acids are sequentially added to a growing amino acid chain. See Merrifield, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 85:2149-2146, 1963. Equipment for automated synthesis of polypeptides is commercially available from suppliers such as Perkin Elmer/Applied BioSystems Division (Foster City, CA), and may
25 be operated according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Within certain specific embodiments, a polypeptide may be a fusion protein that comprises multiple polypeptides as described herein, or that comprises at least one polypeptide as described herein and an unrelated sequence, such as a known tumor protein. A fusion partner may, for example, assist in providing T helper epitopes (an immunological

fusion partner), preferably T helper epitopes recognized by humans, or may assist in expressing the protein (an expression enhancer) at higher yields than the native recombinant protein. Certain preferred fusion partners are both immunological and expression enhancing fusion partners. Other fusion partners may be selected so as to
 5 increase the solubility of the protein or to enable the protein to be targeted to desired intracellular compartments. Still further fusion partners include affinity tags, which facilitate purification of the protein.

Fusion proteins may generally be prepared using standard techniques, including chemical conjugation. Preferably, a fusion protein is expressed as a recombinant
 10 protein, allowing the production of increased levels, relative to a non-fused protein, in an expression system. Briefly, DNA sequences encoding the polypeptide components may be assembled separately, and ligated into an appropriate expression vector. The 3' end of the DNA sequence encoding one polypeptide component is ligated, with or without a peptide linker, to the 5' end of a DNA sequence encoding the second polypeptide component so
 15 that the reading frames of the sequences are in phase. This permits translation into a single fusion protein that retains the biological activity of both component polypeptides.

A peptide linker sequence may be employed to separate the first and second polypeptide components by a distance sufficient to ensure that each polypeptide folds into its secondary and tertiary structures. Such a peptide linker sequence is incorporated into
 20 the fusion protein using standard techniques well known in the art. Suitable peptide linker sequences may be chosen based on the following factors: (1) their ability to adopt a flexible extended conformation; (2) their inability to adopt a secondary structure that could interact with functional epitopes on the first and second polypeptides; and (3) the lack of hydrophobic or charged residues that might react with the polypeptide functional epitopes.
 25 Preferred peptide linker sequences contain Gly, Asn and Ser residues. Other near neutral amino acids, such as Thr and Ala may also be used in the linker sequence. Amino acid sequences which may be usefully employed as linkers include those disclosed in Maratea *et al.*, *Gene* 40:39-46, 1985; Murphy *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 83:8258-8262, 1986; U.S. Patent No. 4,935,233 and U.S. Patent No. 4,751,180. The linker sequence may

generally be from 1 to about 50 amino acids in length. Linker sequences are not required when the first and second polypeptides have non-essential N-terminal amino acid regions that can be used to separate the functional domains and prevent steric interference.

The ligated DNA sequences are operably linked to suitable transcriptional or translational regulatory elements. The regulatory elements responsible for expression of DNA are located only 5' to the DNA sequence encoding the first polypeptides. Similarly, stop codons required to end translation and transcription termination signals are only present 3' to the DNA sequence encoding the second polypeptide.

Fusion proteins are also provided. Such proteins comprise a polypeptide as described herein together with an unrelated immunogenic protein. Preferably the immunogenic protein is capable of eliciting a recall response. Examples of such proteins include tetanus, tuberculosis and hepatitis proteins (*see, for example, Stoute et al. New Engl. J. Med.*, 336:86-91, 1997).

Within preferred embodiments, an immunological fusion partner is derived from protein D, a surface protein of the gram-negative bacterium *Haemophilus influenza B* (WO 91/18926). Preferably, a protein D derivative comprises approximately the first third of the protein (*e.g.*, the first N-terminal 100-110 amino acids), and a protein D derivative may be lipidated. Within certain preferred embodiments, the first 109 residues of a Lipoprotein D fusion partner is included on the N-terminus to provide the polypeptide with additional exogenous T-cell epitopes and to increase the expression level in *E. coli* (thus functioning as an expression enhancer). The lipid tail ensures optimal presentation of the antigen to antigen presenting cells. Other fusion partners include the non-structural protein from influenzae virus, NS1 (hemagglutinin). Typically, the N-terminal 81 amino acids are used, although different fragments that include T-helper epitopes may be used.

In another embodiment, the immunological fusion partner is the protein known as LYTA, or a portion thereof (preferably a C-terminal portion). LYTA is derived from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, which synthesizes an N-acetyl-L-alanine amidase known as amidase LYTA (encoded by the *LytA* gene; *Gene* 43:265-292, 1986). LYTA is an autolysin that specifically degrades certain bonds in the peptidoglycan backbone. The C-

terminal domain of the LYTA protein is responsible for the affinity to the choline or to some choline analogues such as DEAE. This property has been exploited for the development of *E. coli* C-LYTA expressing plasmids useful for expression of fusion proteins. Purification of hybrid proteins containing the C-LYTA fragment at the amino terminus has been described (see *Biotechnology* 10:795-798, 1992). Within a preferred embodiment, a repeat portion of LYTA may be incorporated into a fusion protein. A repeat portion is found in the C-terminal region starting at residue 178. A particularly preferred repeat portion incorporates residues 188-305.

In general, polypeptides (including fusion proteins) and polynucleotides as described herein are isolated. An "isolated" polypeptide or polynucleotide is one that is removed from its original environment. For example, a naturally-occurring protein is isolated if it is separated from some or all of the coexisting materials in the natural system. Preferably, such polypeptides are at least about 90% pure, more preferably at least about 95% pure and most preferably at least about 99% pure. A polynucleotide is considered to be isolated if, for example, it is cloned into a vector that is not a part of the natural environment.

BINDING AGENTS

The present invention further provides agents, such as antibodies and antigen-binding fragments thereof, that specifically bind to a breast tumor protein. As used herein, an antibody, or antigen-binding fragment thereof, is said to "specifically bind" to a breast tumor protein if it reacts at a detectable level (within, for example, an ELISA) with a breast tumor protein, and does not react detectably with unrelated proteins under similar conditions. As used herein, "binding" refers to a noncovalent association between two separate molecules such that a complex is formed. The ability to bind may be evaluated by, for example, determining a binding constant for the formation of the complex. The binding constant is the value obtained when the concentration of the complex is divided by the product of the component concentrations. In general, two compounds are said to "bind," in the context of the present invention, when the binding constant for complex

formation exceeds about 10^3 L/mol. The binding constant may be determined using methods well known in the art.

Binding agents may be further capable of differentiating between patients with and without a cancer, such as breast cancer, using the representative assays provided
 5 herein. In other words, antibodies or other binding agents that bind to a breast tumor protein will generate a signal indicating the presence of a cancer in at least about 20% of patients with the disease, and will generate a negative signal indicating the absence of the disease in at least about 90% of individuals without the cancer. To determine whether a binding agent satisfies this requirement, biological samples (*e.g.*, blood, sera, sputum, urine
 10 and/or tumor biopsies) from patients with and without a cancer (as determined using standard clinical tests) may be assayed as described herein for the presence of polypeptides that bind to the binding agent. It will be apparent that a statistically significant number of samples with and without the disease should be assayed. Each binding agent should satisfy the above criteria; however, those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that binding
 15 agents may be used in combination to improve sensitivity.

Any agent that satisfies the above requirements may be a binding agent. For example, a binding agent may be a ribosome, with or without a peptide component, an RNA molecule or a polypeptide. In a preferred embodiment, a binding agent is an antibody or an antigen-binding fragment thereof. Antibodies may be prepared by any of a
 20 variety of techniques known to those of ordinary skill in the art. *See, e.g.*, Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. In general, antibodies can be produced by cell culture techniques, including the generation of monoclonal antibodies as described herein, or via transfection of antibody genes into suitable bacterial or mammalian cell hosts, in order to allow for the production of
 25 recombinant antibodies. In one technique, an immunogen comprising the polypeptide is initially injected into any of a wide variety of mammals (*e.g.*, mice, rats, rabbits, sheep or goats). In this step, the polypeptides of this invention may serve as the immunogen without modification. Alternatively, particularly for relatively short polypeptides, a superior immune response may be elicited if the polypeptide is joined to a carrier protein, such as

bovine serum albumin or keyhole limpet hemocyanin. The immunogen is injected into the animal host, preferably according to a predetermined schedule incorporating one or more booster immunizations, and the animals are bled periodically. Polyclonal antibodies specific for the polypeptide may then be purified from such antisera by, for example, affinity chromatography using the polypeptide coupled to a suitable solid support.

Monoclonal antibodies specific for an antigenic polypeptide of interest may be prepared, for example, using the technique of Kohler and Milstein, *Eur. J. Immunol.* 6:511-519, 1976, and improvements thereto. Briefly, these methods involve the preparation of immortal cell lines capable of producing antibodies having the desired specificity (*i.e.*, reactivity with the polypeptide of interest). Such cell lines may be produced, for example, from spleen cells obtained from an animal immunized as described above. The spleen cells are then immortalized by, for example, fusion with a myeloma cell fusion partner, preferably one that is syngeneic with the immunized animal. A variety of fusion techniques may be employed. For example, the spleen cells and myeloma cells may be combined with a nonionic detergent for a few minutes and then plated at low density on a selective medium that supports the growth of hybrid cells, but not myeloma cells. A preferred selection technique uses HAT (hypoxanthine, aminopterin, thymidine) selection. After a sufficient time, usually about 1 to 2 weeks, colonies of hybrids are observed. Single colonies are selected and their culture supernatants tested for binding activity against the polypeptide. Hybridomas having high reactivity and specificity are preferred.

Monoclonal antibodies may be isolated from the supernatants of growing hybridoma colonies. In addition, various techniques may be employed to enhance the yield, such as injection of the hybridoma cell line into the peritoneal cavity of a suitable vertebrate host, such as a mouse. Monoclonal antibodies may then be harvested from the ascites fluid or the blood. Contaminants may be removed from the antibodies by conventional techniques, such as chromatography, gel filtration, precipitation, and extraction. The polypeptides of this invention may be used in the purification process in, for example, an affinity chromatography step.

Within certain embodiments, the use of antigen-binding fragments of antibodies may be preferred. Such fragments include Fab fragments, which may be prepared using standard techniques. Briefly, immunoglobulins may be purified from rabbit serum by affinity chromatography on Protein A bead columns (Harlow and Lane, 5 *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988) and digested by papain to yield Fab and Fc fragments. The Fab and Fc fragments may be separated by affinity chromatography on protein A bead columns.

Monoclonal antibodies of the present invention may be coupled to one or more therapeutic agents. Suitable agents in this regard include radionuclides, 10 differentiation inducers, drugs, toxins, and derivatives thereof. Preferred radionuclides include ^{90}Y , ^{123}I , ^{125}I , ^{131}I , ^{186}Re , ^{188}Re , ^{211}At , and ^{212}Bi . Preferred drugs include methotrexate, and pyrimidine and purine analogs. Preferred differentiation inducers include phorbol esters and butyric acid. Preferred toxins include ricin, abrin, diphtheria toxin, cholera toxin, gelonin, *Pseudomonas* exotoxin, *Shigella* toxin, and pokeweed 15 antiviral protein.

A therapeutic agent may be coupled (*e.g.*, covalently bonded) to a suitable monoclonal antibody either directly or indirectly (*e.g.*, via a linker group). A direct reaction between an agent and an antibody is possible when each possesses a substituent capable of reacting with the other. For example, a nucleophilic group, such as an amino or 20 sulfhydryl group, on one may be capable of reacting with a carbonyl-containing group, such as an anhydride or an acid halide, or with an alkyl group containing a good leaving group (*e.g.*, a halide) on the other.

Alternatively, it may be desirable to couple a therapeutic agent and an antibody via a linker group. A linker group can function as a spacer to distance an 25 antibody from an agent in order to avoid interference with binding capabilities. A linker group can also serve to increase the chemical reactivity of a substituent on an agent or an antibody, and thus increase the coupling efficiency. An increase in chemical reactivity may also facilitate the use of agents, or functional groups on agents, which otherwise would not be possible.

It will be evident to those skilled in the art that a variety of bifunctional or polyfunctional reagents, both homo- and hetero-functional (such as those described in the catalog of the Pierce Chemical Co., Rockford, IL), may be employed as the linker group. Coupling may be effected, for example, through amino groups, carboxyl groups, sulfhydryl groups or oxidized carbohydrate residues. There are numerous references describing such methodology, *e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,671,958, to Rodwell *et al.*

Where a therapeutic agent is more potent when free from the antibody portion of the immunoconjugates of the present invention, it may be desirable to use a linker group which is cleavable during or upon internalization into a cell. A number of different cleavable linker groups have been described. The mechanisms for the intracellular release of an agent from these linker groups include cleavage by reduction of a disulfide bond (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,489,710, to Spitler), by irradiation of a photolabile bond (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,625,014, to Senter *et al.*), by hydrolysis of derivatized amino acid side chains (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,638,045, to Kohn *et al.*), by serum complement-mediated hydrolysis (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,671,958, to Rodwell *et al.*), and acid-catalyzed hydrolysis (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,569,789, to Blattler *et al.*).

It may be desirable to couple more than one agent to an antibody. In one embodiment, multiple molecules of an agent are coupled to one antibody molecule. In another embodiment, more than one type of agent may be coupled to one antibody. Regardless of the particular embodiment, immunoconjugates with more than one agent may be prepared in a variety of ways. For example, more than one agent may be coupled directly to an antibody molecule, or linkers that provide multiple sites for attachment can be used. Alternatively, a carrier can be used.

A carrier may bear the agents in a variety of ways, including covalent bonding either directly or via a linker group. Suitable carriers include proteins such as albumins (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,507,234, to Kato *et al.*), peptides and polysaccharides such as aminodextran (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent No. 4,699,784, to Shih *et al.*). A carrier may also bear an agent by noncovalent bonding or by encapsulation, such as within a liposome vesicle (*e.g.*, U.S. Patent Nos. 4,429,008 and 4,873,088). Carriers specific for radionuclide

agents include radiohalogenated small molecules and chelating compounds. For example, U.S. Patent No. 4,735,792 discloses representative radiohalogenated small molecules and their synthesis. A radionuclide chelate may be formed from chelating compounds that include those containing nitrogen and sulfur atoms as the donor atoms for binding the metal, or metal oxide, radionuclide. For example, U.S. Patent No. 4,673,562, to Davison *et al.* discloses representative chelating compounds and their synthesis.

A variety of routes of administration for the antibodies and immunoconjugates may be used. Typically, administration will be intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous or in the bed of a resected tumor. It will be evident that the precise dose of the antibody/immunoconjugate will vary depending upon the antibody used, the antigen density on the tumor, and the rate of clearance of the antibody.

T CELLS

Immunotherapeutic compositions may also, or alternatively, comprise T cells specific for a breast tumor protein. Such cells may generally be prepared *in vitro* or *ex vivo*, using standard procedures. For example, T cells may be isolated from bone marrow, peripheral blood, or a fraction of bone marrow or peripheral blood of a patient, using a commercially available cell separation system, such as the Isolex™ System, available from Nexell Therapeutics, Inc. (Irvine, CA; see also U.S. Patent No. 5,240,856; U.S. Patent No. 5,215,926; WO 89/06280; WO 91/16116 and WO 92/07243). Alternatively, T cells may be derived from related or unrelated humans, non-human mammals, cell lines or cultures.

T cells may be stimulated with a breast tumor polypeptide, polynucleotide encoding a breast tumor polypeptide and/or an antigen presenting cell (APC) that expresses such a polypeptide. Such stimulation is performed under conditions and for a time sufficient to permit the generation of T cells that are specific for the polypeptide. Preferably, a breast tumor polypeptide or polynucleotide is present within a delivery vehicle, such as a microsphere, to facilitate the generation of specific T cells.

T cells are considered to be specific for a breast tumor polypeptide if the T cells specifically proliferate, secrete cytokines or kill target cells coated with the polypeptide or expressing a gene encoding the polypeptide. T cell specificity may be evaluated using any of a variety of standard techniques. For example, within a chromium release assay or proliferation assay, a stimulation index of more than two fold increase in lysis and/or proliferation, compared to negative controls, indicates T cell specificity. Such assays may be performed, for example, as described in Chen *et al.*, *Cancer Res.* 54:1065-1070, 1994. Alternatively, detection of the proliferation of T cells may be accomplished by a variety of known techniques. For example, T cell proliferation can be detected by measuring an increased rate of DNA synthesis (*e.g.*, by pulse-labeling cultures of T cells with tritiated thymidine and measuring the amount of tritiated thymidine incorporated into DNA). Contact with a breast tumor polypeptide (100 ng/ml - 100 µg/ml, preferably 200 ng/ml - 25 µg/ml) for 3 - 7 days should result in at least a two fold increase in proliferation of the T cells. Contact as described above for 2-3 hours should result in activation of the T cells, as measured using standard cytokine assays in which a two fold increase in the level of cytokine release (*e.g.*, TNF or IFN-γ) is indicative of T cell activation (*see* Coligan *et al.*, *Current Protocols in Immunology*, vol. 1, Wiley Interscience (Greene 1998)). T cells that have been activated in response to a breast tumor polypeptide, polynucleotide or polypeptide-expressing APC may be CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺. Breast tumor protein-specific T cells may be expanded using standard techniques. Within preferred embodiments, the T cells are derived from a patient, a related donor or an unrelated donor, and are administered to the patient following stimulation and expansion.

For therapeutic purposes, CD4⁺ or CD8⁺ T cells that proliferate in response to a breast tumor polypeptide, polynucleotide or APC can be expanded in number either *in vitro* or *in vivo*. Proliferation of such T cells *in vitro* may be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, the T cells can be re-exposed to a breast tumor polypeptide, or a short peptide corresponding to an immunogenic portion of such a polypeptide, with or without the addition of T cell growth factors, such as interleukin-2, and/or stimulator cells that synthesize a breast tumor polypeptide. Alternatively, one or more T cells that

proliferate in the presence of a breast tumor protein can be expanded in number by cloning. Methods for cloning cells are well known in the art, and include limiting dilution.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS

In additional embodiments, the present invention concerns formulation of one or more of the polynucleotide, polypeptide, T-cell and/or antibody compositions disclosed herein in pharmaceutically-acceptable solutions for administration to a cell or an animal, either alone, or in combination with one or more other modalities of therapy.

It will also be understood that, if desired, the nucleic acid segment, RNA, DNA or PNA compositions that express a polypeptide as disclosed herein may be administered in combination with other agents as well, such as, *e.g.*, other proteins or polypeptides or various pharmaceutically-active agents. In fact, there is virtually no limit to other components that may also be included, given that the additional agents do not cause a significant adverse effect upon contact with the target cells or host tissues. The compositions may thus be delivered along with various other agents as required in the particular instance. Such compositions may be purified from host cells or other biological sources, or alternatively may be chemically synthesized as described herein. Likewise, such compositions may further comprise substituted or derivatized RNA or DNA compositions.

Formulation of pharmaceutically-acceptable excipients and carrier solutions is well-known to those of skill in the art, as is the development of suitable dosing and treatment regimens for using the particular compositions described herein in a variety of treatment regimens, including *e.g.*, oral, parenteral, intravenous, intranasal, and intramuscular administration and formulation.

1. ORAL DELIVERY

In certain applications, the pharmaceutical compositions disclosed herein may be delivered *via* oral administration to an animal. As such, these compositions may be formulated with an inert diluent or with an assimilable edible carrier, or they may be

enclosed in hard- or soft-shell gelatin capsule, or they may be compressed into tablets, or they may be incorporated directly with the food of the diet.

The active compounds may even be incorporated with excipients and used in the form of ingestible tablets, buccal tables, troches, capsules, elixirs, suspensions, syrups, wafers, and the like (Mathiowitz *et al.*, 1997; Hwang *et al.*, 1998; U. S. Patent 5,641,515; U. S. Patent 5,580,579 and U. S. Patent 5,792,451, each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). The tablets, troches, pills, capsules and the like may also contain the following: a binder, as gum tragacanth, acacia, cornstarch, or gelatin; excipients, such as dicalcium phosphate; a disintegrating agent, such as corn starch, potato starch, alginic acid and the like; a lubricant, such as magnesium stearate; and a sweetening agent, such as sucrose, lactose or saccharin may be added or a flavoring agent, such as peppermint, oil of wintergreen, or cherry flavoring. When the dosage unit form is a capsule, it may contain, in addition to materials of the above type, a liquid carrier. Various other materials may be present as coatings or to otherwise modify the physical form of the dosage unit. For instance, tablets, pills, or capsules may be coated with shellac, sugar, or both. A syrup or elixir may contain the active compound sucrose as a sweetening agent methyl and propylparabens as preservatives, a dye and flavoring, such as cherry or orange flavor. Of course, any material used in preparing any dosage unit form should be pharmaceutically pure and substantially non-toxic in the amounts employed. In addition, the active compounds may be incorporated into sustained-release preparation and formulations.

Typically, these formulations may contain at least about 0.1% of the active compound or more, although the percentage of the active ingredient(s) may, of course, be varied and may conveniently be between about 1 or 2% and about 60% or 70% or more of the weight or volume of the total formulation. Naturally, the amount of active compound(s) in each therapeutically useful composition may be prepared in such a way that a suitable dosage will be obtained in any given unit dose of the compound. Factors such as solubility, bioavailability, biological half-life, route of administration, product shelf life, as well as other pharmacological considerations will be contemplated by one skilled in

the art of preparing such pharmaceutical formulations, and as such, a variety of dosages and treatment regimens may be desirable.

For oral administration the compositions of the present invention may alternatively be incorporated with one or more excipients in the form of a mouthwash, dentifrice, buccal tablet, oral spray, or sublingual orally-administered formulation. For example, a mouthwash may be prepared incorporating the active ingredient in the required amount in an appropriate solvent, such as a sodium borate solution (Dobell's Solution). Alternatively, the active ingredient may be incorporated into an oral solution such as one containing sodium borate, glycerin and potassium bicarbonate, or dispersed in a dentifrice, or added in a therapeutically-effective amount to a composition that may include water, binders, abrasives, flavoring agents, foaming agents, and humectants. Alternatively the compositions may be fashioned into a tablet or solution form that may be placed under the tongue or otherwise dissolved in the mouth.

2. INJECTABLE DELIVERY

In certain circumstances it will be desirable to deliver the pharmaceutical compositions disclosed herein parenterally, intravenously, intramuscularly, or even intraperitoneally as described in U. S. Patent 5,543,158; U. S. Patent 5,641,515 and U. S. Patent 5,399,363 (each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). Solutions of the active compounds as free base or pharmacologically acceptable salts may be prepared in water suitably mixed with a surfactant, such as hydroxypropylcellulose. Dispersions may also be prepared in glycerol, liquid polyethylene glycols, and mixtures thereof and in oils. Under ordinary conditions of storage and use, these preparations contain a preservative to prevent the growth of microorganisms.

The pharmaceutical forms suitable for injectable use include sterile aqueous solutions or dispersions and sterile powders for the extemporaneous preparation of sterile injectable solutions or dispersions (U. S. Patent 5,466,468, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). In all cases the form must be sterile and must be fluid to the extent that easy syringability exists. It must be stable under the conditions of manufacture

and storage and must be preserved against the contaminating action of microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi. The carrier can be a solvent or dispersion medium containing, for example, water, ethanol, polyol (*e.g.*, glycerol, propylene glycol, and liquid polyethylene glycol, and the like), suitable mixtures thereof, and/or vegetable oils. Proper fluidity may be maintained, for example, by the use of a coating, such as lecithin, by the maintenance of the required particle size in the case of dispersion and by the use of surfactants. The prevention of the action of microorganisms can be facilitated by various antibacterial and antifungal agents, for example, parabens, chlorobutanol, phenol, sorbic acid, thimerosal, and the like. In many cases, it will be preferable to include isotonic agents, for example, sugars or sodium chloride. Prolonged absorption of the injectable compositions can be brought about by the use in the compositions of agents delaying absorption, for example, aluminum monostearate and gelatin.

For parenteral administration in an aqueous solution, for example, the solution should be suitably buffered if necessary and the liquid diluent first rendered isotonic with sufficient saline or glucose. These particular aqueous solutions are especially suitable for intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous and intraperitoneal administration. In this connection, a sterile aqueous medium that can be employed will be known to those of skill in the art in light of the present disclosure. For example, one dosage may be dissolved in 1 ml of isotonic NaCl solution and either added to 1000 ml of hypodermoclysis fluid or injected at the proposed site of infusion, (see for example, "Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences" 15th Edition, pages 1035-1038 and 1570-1580). Some variation in dosage will necessarily occur depending on the condition of the subject being treated. The person responsible for administration will, in any event, determine the appropriate dose for the individual subject. Moreover, for human administration, preparations should meet sterility, pyrogenicity, and the general safety and purity standards as required by FDA Office of Biologics standards.

Sterile injectable solutions are prepared by incorporating the active compounds in the required amount in the appropriate solvent with various of the other ingredients enumerated above, as required, followed by filtered sterilization. Generally,

dispersions are prepared by incorporating the various sterilized active ingredients into a sterile vehicle which contains the basic dispersion medium and the required other ingredients from those enumerated above. In the case of sterile powders for the preparation of sterile injectable solutions, the preferred methods of preparation are vacuum-drying and freeze-drying techniques which yield a powder of the active ingredient plus any additional desired ingredient from a previously sterile-filtered solution thereof.

The compositions disclosed herein may be formulated in a neutral or salt form. Pharmaceutically-acceptable salts, include the acid addition salts (formed with the free amino groups of the protein) and which are formed with inorganic acids such as, for example, hydrochloric or phosphoric acids, or such organic acids as acetic, oxalic, tartaric, mandelic, and the like. Salts formed with the free carboxyl groups can also be derived from inorganic bases such as, for example, sodium, potassium, ammonium, calcium, or ferric hydroxides, and such organic bases as isopropylamine, trimethylamine, histidine, procaine and the like. Upon formulation, solutions will be administered in a manner compatible with the dosage formulation and in such amount as is therapeutically effective. The formulations are easily administered in a variety of dosage forms such as injectable solutions, drug-release capsules, and the like.

As used herein, "carrier" includes any and all solvents, dispersion media, vehicles, coatings, diluents, antibacterial and antifungal agents, isotonic and absorption delaying agents, buffers, carrier solutions, suspensions, colloids, and the like. The use of such media and agents for pharmaceutical active substances is well known in the art. Except insofar as any conventional media or agent is incompatible with the active ingredient, its use in the therapeutic compositions is contemplated. Supplementary active ingredients can also be incorporated into the compositions.

The phrase "pharmaceutically-acceptable" refers to molecular entities and compositions that do not produce an allergic or similar untoward reaction when administered to a human. The preparation of an aqueous composition that contains a protein as an active ingredient is well understood in the art. Typically, such compositions are prepared as injectables, either as liquid solutions or suspensions; solid forms suitable

for solution in, or suspension in, liquid prior to injection can also be prepared. The preparation can also be emulsified.

3. NASAL DELIVERY

In certain embodiments, the pharmaceutical compositions may be delivered by intranasal sprays, inhalation, and/or other aerosol delivery vehicles. Methods for delivering genes, nucleic acids, and peptide compositions directly to the lungs *via* nasal aerosol sprays has been described *e.g.*, in U. S. Patent 5,756,353 and U. S. Patent 5,804,212 (each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). Likewise, the delivery of drugs using intranasal microparticle resins (Takenaga *et al.*, 1998) and lysophosphatidyl-glycerol compounds (U. S. Patent 5,725,871, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety) are also well-known in the pharmaceutical arts. Likewise, transmucosal drug delivery in the form of a polytetrafluoroethylene support matrix is described in U. S. Patent 5,780,045 (specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety).

4. LIPOSOME-, NANOCAPSULE-, AND MICROPARTICLE-MEDIATED DELIVERY

In certain embodiments, the inventors contemplate the use of liposomes, nanocapsules, microparticles, microspheres, lipid particles, vesicles, and the like, for the introduction of the compositions of the present invention into suitable host cells. In particular, the compositions of the present invention may be formulated for delivery either encapsulated in a lipid particle, a liposome, a vesicle, a nanosphere, or a nanoparticle or the like.

Such formulations may be preferred for the introduction of pharmaceutically-acceptable formulations of the nucleic acids or constructs disclosed herein. The formation and use of liposomes is generally known to those of skill in the art (see for example, Couvreur *et al.*, 1977; Couvreur, 1988; Lasic, 1998; which describes the use of liposomes and nanocapsules in the targeted antibiotic therapy for intracellular bacterial infections and diseases). Recently, liposomes were developed with improved serum stability and circulation half-times (Gabizon and Papahadjopoulos, 1988; Allen and

Choun, 1987; U. S. Patent 5,741,516, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety). Further, various methods of liposome and liposome like preparations as potential drug carriers have been reviewed (Takakura, 1998; Chandran *et al.*, 1997; Margalit, 1995; U. S. Patent 5,567,434; U. S. Patent 5,552,157; U. S. Patent 5,565,213; U. S. Patent 5,738,868 and U. S. Patent 5,795,587, each specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety).

Liposomes have been used successfully with a number of cell types that are normally resistant to transfection by other procedures including T cell suspensions, primary hepatocyte cultures and PC 12 cells (Renneisen *et al.*, 1990; Muller *et al.*, 1990). In addition, liposomes are free of the DNA length constraints that are typical of viral-based delivery systems. Liposomes have been used effectively to introduce genes, drugs (Heath and Martin, 1986; Heath *et al.*, 1986; Balazsovits *et al.*, 1989; Fresta and Puglisi, 1996), radiotherapeutic agents (Pikul *et al.*, 1987), enzymes (Imaizumi *et al.*, 1990a; Imaizumi *et al.*, 1990b), viruses (Faller and Baltimore, 1984), transcription factors and allosteric effectors (Nicolau and Gersonde, 1979) into a variety of cultured cell lines and animals. In addition, several successful clinical trails examining the effectiveness of liposome-mediated drug delivery have been completed (Lopez-Berestein *et al.*, 1985a; 1985b; Coune, 1988; Sculier *et al.*, 1988). Furthermore, several studies suggest that the use of liposomes is not associated with autoimmune responses, toxicity or gonadal localization after systemic delivery (Mori and Fukatsu, 1992).

Liposomes are formed from phospholipids that are dispersed in an aqueous medium and spontaneously form multilamellar concentric bilayer vesicles (also termed multilamellar vesicles (MLVs). MLVs generally have diameters of from 25 nm to 4 μ m. Sonication of MLVs results in the formation of small unilamellar vesicles (SUVs) with diameters in the range of 200 to 500 Å, containing an aqueous solution in the core.

Liposomes bear resemblance to cellular membranes and are contemplated for use in connection with the present invention as carriers for the peptide compositions. They are widely suitable as both water- and lipid-soluble substances can be entrapped, *i.e.* in the aqueous spaces and within the bilayer itself, respectively. It is possible that the drug-

bearing liposomes may even be employed for site-specific delivery of active agents by selectively modifying the liposomal formulation.

In addition to the teachings of Couvreur *et al.* (1977; 1988), the following information may be utilized in generating liposomal formulations. Phospholipids can form a variety of structures other than liposomes when dispersed in water, depending on the molar ratio of lipid to water. At low ratios the liposome is the preferred structure. The physical characteristics of liposomes depend on pH, ionic strength and the presence of divalent cations. Liposomes can show low permeability to ionic and polar substances, but at elevated temperatures undergo a phase transition which markedly alters their permeability. The phase transition involves a change from a closely packed, ordered structure, known as the gel state, to a loosely packed, less-ordered structure, known as the fluid state. This occurs at a characteristic phase-transition temperature and results in an increase in permeability to ions, sugars and drugs.

In addition to temperature, exposure to proteins can alter the permeability of liposomes. Certain soluble proteins, such as cytochrome c, bind, deform and penetrate the bilayer, thereby causing changes in permeability. Cholesterol inhibits this penetration of proteins, apparently by packing the phospholipids more tightly. It is contemplated that the most useful liposome formations for antibiotic and inhibitor delivery will contain cholesterol.

The ability to trap solutes varies between different types of liposomes. For example, MLVs are moderately efficient at trapping solutes, but SUVs are extremely inefficient. SUVs offer the advantage of homogeneity and reproducibility in size distribution, however, and a compromise between size and trapping efficiency is offered by large unilamellar vesicles (LUVs). These are prepared by ether evaporation and are three to four times more efficient at solute entrapment than MLVs.

In addition to liposome characteristics, an important determinant in entrapping compounds is the physicochemical properties of the compound itself. Polar compounds are trapped in the aqueous spaces and nonpolar compounds bind to the lipid bilayer of the vesicle. Polar compounds are released through permeation or when the

bilayer is broken, but nonpolar compounds remain affiliated with the bilayer unless it is disrupted by temperature or exposure to lipoproteins. Both types show maximum efflux rates at the phase transition temperature.

Liposomes interact with cells *via* four different mechanisms: endocytosis
 5 by phagocytic cells of the reticuloendothelial system such as macrophages and neutrophils; adsorption to the cell surface, either by nonspecific weak hydrophobic or electrostatic forces, or by specific interactions with cell-surface components; fusion with the plasma cell membrane by insertion of the lipid bilayer of the liposome into the plasma membrane, with simultaneous release of liposomal contents into the cytoplasm; and by transfer of liposomal
 10 lipids to cellular or subcellular membranes, or vice versa, without any association of the liposome contents. It often is difficult to determine which mechanism is operative and more than one may operate at the same time.

The fate and disposition of intravenously injected liposomes depend on their physical properties, such as size, fluidity, and surface charge. They may persist in tissues
 15 for h or days, depending on their composition, and half lives in the blood range from min to several h. Larger liposomes, such as MLVs and LUVs, are taken up rapidly by phagocytic cells of the reticuloendothelial system, but physiology of the circulatory system restrains the exit of such large species at most sites. They can exit only in places where large openings or pores exist in the capillary endothelium, such as the sinusoids of the liver or
 20 spleen. Thus, these organs are the predominate site of uptake. On the other hand, SUVs show a broader tissue distribution but still are sequestered highly in the liver and spleen. In general, this *in vivo* behavior limits the potential targeting of liposomes to only those organs and tissues accessible to their large size. These include the blood, liver, spleen, bone marrow, and lymphoid organs.

25 Targeting is generally not a limitation in terms of the present invention. However, should specific targeting be desired, methods are available for this to be accomplished. Antibodies may be used to bind to the liposome surface and to direct the antibody and its drug contents to specific antigenic receptors located on a particular cell-type surface. Carbohydrate determinants (glycoprotein or glycolipid cell-surface

components that play a role in cell-cell recognition, interaction and adhesion) may also be used as recognition sites as they have potential in directing liposomes to particular cell types. Mostly, it is contemplated that intravenous injection of liposomal preparations would be used, but other routes of administration are also conceivable.

5 Alternatively, the invention provides for pharmaceutically-acceptable nanocapsule formulations of the compositions of the present invention. Nanocapsules can generally entrap compounds in a stable and reproducible way (Henry-Michelland *et al.*, 1987; Quintanar-Guerrero *et al.*, 1998; Douglas *et al.*, 1987). To avoid side effects due to intracellular polymeric overloading, such ultrafine particles (sized around 0.1 μm) should
10 be designed using polymers able to be degraded *in vivo*. Biodegradable polyalkylcyanoacrylate nanoparticles that meet these requirements are contemplated for use in the present invention. Such particles may be easily made, as described (Couvreux *et al.*, 1980; 1988; zur Muhlen *et al.*, 1998; Zambaux *et al.* 1998; Pinto-Alphandry *et al.*, 1995 and U. S. Patent 5,145,684, specifically incorporated herein by reference in its entirety).

15 IMMUNOGENIC COMPOSITIONS

In certain preferred embodiments of the present invention, immunogenic compositions, or vaccines, are provided. The immunogenic compositions will generally comprise one or more pharmaceutical compositions, such as those discussed above, in combination with an immunostimulant. An immunostimulant may be any substance that
20 enhances or potentiates an immune response (antibody and/or cell-mediated) to an exogenous antigen. Examples of immunostimulants include adjuvants, biodegradable microspheres (*e.g.*, polylactic galactide) and liposomes (into which the compound is incorporated; *see e.g.*, Fullerton, U.S. Patent No. 4,235,877). Vaccine preparation is generally described in, for example, M.F. Powell and M.J. Newman, eds., "Vaccine Design
25 (the subunit and adjuvant approach)," Plenum Press (NY, 1995). Pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions within the scope of the present invention may also contain other compounds, which may be biologically active or inactive. For

example, one or more immunogenic portions of other tumor antigens may be present, either incorporated into a fusion polypeptide or as a separate compound, within the composition.

Illustrative immunogenic compositions may contain DNA encoding one or more of the polypeptides as described above, such that the polypeptide is generated *in situ*.

- 5 As noted above, the DNA may be present within any of a variety of delivery systems known to those of ordinary skill in the art, including nucleic acid expression systems, bacteria and viral expression systems. Numerous gene delivery techniques are well known in the art, such as those described by Rolland, *Crit. Rev. Therap. Drug Carrier Systems* 15:143-198, 1998, and references cited therein. Appropriate nucleic acid expression
- 10 systems contain the necessary DNA sequences for expression in the patient (such as a suitable promoter and terminating signal). Bacterial delivery systems involve the administration of a bacterium (such as *Bacillus-Calmette-Guerrin*) that expresses an immunogenic portion of the polypeptide on its cell surface or secretes such an epitope. In a preferred embodiment, the DNA may be introduced using a viral expression system (e.g.,
- 15 vaccinia or other pox virus, retrovirus, or adenovirus), which may involve the use of a non-pathogenic (defective), replication competent virus. Suitable systems are disclosed, for example, in Fisher-Hoch *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 86:317-321, 1989; Flexner *et al.*, *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci.* 569:86-103, 1989; Flexner *et al.*, *Vaccine* 8:17-21, 1990; U.S. Patent Nos. 4,603,112, 4,769,330, and 5,017,487; WO 89/01973; U.S. Patent
- 20 No. 4,777,127; GB 2,200,651; EP 0,345,242; WO 91/02805; Berkner, *Biotechniques* 6:616-627, 1988; Rosenfeld *et al.*, *Science* 252:431-434, 1991; Kolls *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 91:215-219, 1994; Kass-Eisler *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 90:11498-11502, 1993; Guzman *et al.*, *Circulation* 88:2838-2848, 1993; and Guzman *et al.*, *Cir. Res.* 73:1202-1207, 1993. Techniques for incorporating DNA into such expression
- 25 systems are well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. The DNA may also be "naked," as described, for example, in Ulmer *et al.*, *Science* 259:1745-1749, 1993 and reviewed by Cohen, *Science* 259:1691-1692, 1993. The uptake of naked DNA may be increased by coating the DNA onto biodegradable beads, which are efficiently transported into the cells. It will be apparent that an immunogenic composition may comprise both a

polynucleotide and a polypeptide component. Such immunogenic compositions may provide for an enhanced immune response.

It will be apparent that an immunogenic composition may contain pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the polynucleotides and polypeptides provided herein.

- 5 Such salts may be prepared from pharmaceutically acceptable non-toxic bases, including organic bases (*e.g.*, salts of primary, secondary and tertiary amines and basic amino acids) and inorganic bases (*e.g.*, sodium, potassium, lithium, ammonium, calcium and magnesium salts).

- While any suitable carrier known to those of ordinary skill in the art may be employed in the compositions of this invention, the type of carrier will vary depending on the mode of administration. Compositions of the present invention may be formulated for any appropriate manner of administration, including for example, topical, oral, nasal, intravenous, intracranial, intraperitoneal, subcutaneous or intramuscular administration. For parenteral administration, such as subcutaneous injection, the carrier preferably
- 15 comprises water, saline, alcohol, a fat, a wax or a buffer. For oral administration, any of the above carriers or a solid carrier, such as mannitol, lactose, starch, magnesium stearate, sodium saccharine, talcum, cellulose, glucose, sucrose, and magnesium carbonate, may be employed. Biodegradable microspheres (*e.g.*, polylactate polyglycolate) may also be employed as carriers for the pharmaceutical compositions of this invention. Suitable
- 20 biodegradable microspheres are disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,897,268; 5,075,109; 5,928,647; 5,811,128; 5,820,883; 5,853,763; 5,814,344 and 5,942,252. One may also employ a carrier comprising the particulate-protein complexes described in U.S. Patent No. 5,928,647, which are capable of inducing a class I-restricted cytotoxic T lymphocyte responses in a host.

- 25 Such compositions may also comprise buffers (*e.g.*, neutral buffered saline or phosphate buffered saline), carbohydrates (*e.g.*, glucose, mannose, sucrose or dextrans), mannitol, proteins, polypeptides or amino acids such as glycine, antioxidants, bacteriostats, chelating agents such as EDTA or glutathione, adjuvants (*e.g.*, aluminum hydroxide), solutes that render the formulation isotonic, hypotonic or weakly hypertonic with the blood

of a recipient, suspending agents, thickening agents and/or preservatives. Alternatively, compositions of the present invention may be formulated as a lyophilizate. Compounds may also be encapsulated within liposomes using well known technology.

Any of a variety of immunostimulants may be employed in the immunogenic compositions of this invention. For example, an adjuvant may be included. Most adjuvants contain a substance designed to protect the antigen from rapid catabolism, such as aluminum hydroxide or mineral oil, and a stimulator of immune responses, such as lipid A, *Bordetella pertussis* or *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* derived proteins. Suitable adjuvants are commercially available as, for example, Freund's Incomplete Adjuvant and Complete Adjuvant (Difco Laboratories, Detroit, MI); Merck Adjuvant 65 (Merck and Company, Inc., Rahway, NJ); AS-2 (SmithKline Beecham, Philadelphia, PA); aluminum salts such as aluminum hydroxide gel (alum) or aluminum phosphate; salts of calcium, iron or zinc; an insoluble suspension of acylated tyrosine; acylated sugars; cationically or anionically derivatized polysaccharides; polyphosphazenes; biodegradable microspheres; monophosphoryl lipid A and quil A. Cytokines, such as GM-CSF or interleukin-2, -7, or -12, may also be used as adjuvants.

Within the immunogenic compositions provided herein, the adjuvant composition is preferably designed to induce an immune response predominantly of the Th1 type. High levels of Th1-type cytokines (*e.g.*, IFN- γ , TNF α , IL-2 and IL-12) tend to favor the induction of cell mediated immune responses to an administered antigen. In contrast, high levels of Th2-type cytokines (*e.g.*, IL-4, IL-5, IL-6 and IL-10) tend to favor the induction of humoral immune responses. Following application of an immunogenic composition as provided herein, a patient will support an immune response that includes Th1- and Th2-type responses. Within a preferred embodiment, in which a response is predominantly Th1-type, the level of Th1-type cytokines will increase to a greater extent than the level of Th2-type cytokines. The levels of these cytokines may be readily assessed using standard assays. For a review of the families of cytokines, see Mosmann and Coffman, *Ann. Rev. Immunol.* 7:145-173, 1989.

Preferred adjuvants for use in eliciting a predominantly Th1-type response include, for example, a combination of monophosphoryl lipid A, preferably 3-de-O-acylated monophosphoryl lipid A (3D-MPL), together with an aluminum salt. MPL adjuvants are available from Corixa Corporation (Seattle, WA; *see* US Patent Nos. 5 4,436,727; 4,877,611; 4,866,034 and 4,912,094). CpG-containing oligonucleotides (in which the CpG dinucleotide is unmethylated) also induce a predominantly Th1 response. Such oligonucleotides are well known and are described, for example, in WO 96/02555, WO 99/33488 and U.S. Patent Nos. 6,008,200 and 5,856,462. Immunostimulatory DNA sequences are also described, for example, by Sato *et al.*, *Science* 273:352, 1996. Another 10 preferred adjuvant is a saponin, preferably QS21 (Aquila Biopharmaceuticals Inc., Framingham, MA), which may be used alone or in combination with other adjuvants. For example, an enhanced system involves the combination of a monophosphoryl lipid A and saponin derivative, such as the combination of QS21 and 3D-MPL as described in WO 94/00153, or a less reactogenic composition where the QS21 is quenched with cholesterol, 15 as described in WO 96/33739. Other preferred formulations comprise an oil-in-water emulsion and tocopherol. A particularly potent adjuvant formulation involving QS21, 3D-MPL and tocopherol in an oil-in-water emulsion is described in WO 95/17210.

Other preferred adjuvants include Montanide ISA 720 (Seppic, France), SAF (Chiron, California, United States), ISCOMS (CSL), MF-59 (Chiron), the SBAS 20 series of adjuvants (*e.g.*, SBAS-2 or SBAS-4, available from SmithKline Beecham, Rixensart, Belgium), Detox (Corixa, Hamilton, MT), RC-529 (Corixa, Hamilton, MT) and other aminoalkyl glucosaminide 4-phosphates (AGPs), such as those described in pending U.S. Patent Application Serial Nos. 08/853,826 and 09/074,720, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

25 Any immunogenic composition provided herein may be prepared using well known methods that result in a combination of antigen, immune response enhancer and a suitable carrier or excipient. The compositions described herein may be administered as part of a sustained release formulation (*i.e.*, a formulation such as a capsule, sponge or gel (composed of polysaccharides, for example) that effects a slow release of compound

following administration). Such formulations may generally be prepared using well known technology (*see, e.g., Coombes et al., Vaccine 14:1429-1438, 1996*) and administered by, for example, oral, rectal or subcutaneous implantation, or by implantation at the desired target site. Sustained-release formulations may contain a polypeptide, polynucleotide or
 5 antibody dispersed in a carrier matrix and/or contained within a reservoir surrounded by a rate controlling membrane.

Carriers for use within such formulations are biocompatible, and may also be biodegradable; preferably the formulation provides a relatively constant level of active component release. Such carriers include microparticles of poly(lactide-co-glycolide),
 10 polyacrylate, latex, starch, cellulose, dextran and the like. Other delayed-release carriers include supramolecular biovectors, which comprise a non-liquid hydrophilic core (*e.g., a cross-linked polysaccharide or oligosaccharide*) and, optionally, an external layer comprising an amphiphilic compound, such as a phospholipid (*see e.g., U.S. Patent No. 5,151,254 and PCT applications WO 94/20078, WO/94/23701 and WO 96/06638*). The
 15 amount of active compound contained within a sustained release formulation depends upon the site of implantation, the rate and expected duration of release and the nature of the condition to be treated or prevented.

Any of a variety of delivery vehicles may be employed within pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions to facilitate production of an
 20 antigen-specific immune response that targets tumor cells. Delivery vehicles include antigen presenting cells (APCs), such as dendritic cells, macrophages, B cells, monocytes and other cells that may be engineered to be efficient APCs. Such cells may, but need not, be genetically modified to increase the capacity for presenting the antigen, to improve activation and/or maintenance of the T cell response, to have anti-tumor effects *per se*
 25 and/or to be immunologically compatible with the receiver (*i.e., matched HLA haplotype*). APCs may generally be isolated from any of a variety of biological fluids and organs, including tumor and peritumoral tissues, and may be autologous, allogeneic, syngeneic or xenogeneic cells.

Certain preferred embodiments of the present invention use dendritic cells or progenitors thereof as antigen-presenting cells. Dendritic cells are highly potent APCs (Banchereau and Steinman, *Nature* 392:245-251, 1998) and have been shown to be effective as a physiological adjuvant for eliciting prophylactic or therapeutic antitumor immunity (see Timmerman and Levy, *Ann. Rev. Med.* 50:507-529, 1999). In general, dendritic cells may be identified based on their typical shape (stellate *in situ*, with marked cytoplasmic processes (dendrites) visible *in vitro*), their ability to take up, process and present antigens with high efficiency and their ability to activate naïve T cell responses. Dendritic cells may, of course, be engineered to express specific cell-surface receptors or ligands that are not commonly found on dendritic cells *in vivo* or *ex vivo*, and such modified dendritic cells are contemplated by the present invention. As an alternative to dendritic cells, secreted vesicles antigen-loaded dendritic cells (called exosomes) may be used within an immunogenic composition (see Zitvogel *et al.*, *Nature Med.* 4:594-600, 1998).

Dendritic cells and progenitors may be obtained from peripheral blood, bone marrow, tumor-infiltrating cells, peritumoral tissues-infiltrating cells, lymph nodes, spleen, skin, umbilical cord blood or any other suitable tissue or fluid. For example, dendritic cells may be differentiated *ex vivo* by adding a combination of cytokines such as GM-CSF, IL-4, IL-13 and/or TNF α to cultures of monocytes harvested from peripheral blood. Alternatively, CD34 positive cells harvested from peripheral blood, umbilical cord blood or bone marrow may be differentiated into dendritic cells by adding to the culture medium combinations of GM-CSF, IL-3, TNF α , CD40 ligand, LPS, flt3 ligand and/or other compound(s) that induce differentiation, maturation and proliferation of dendritic cells.

Dendritic cells are conveniently categorized as "immature" and "mature" cells, which allows a simple way to discriminate between two well characterized phenotypes. However, this nomenclature should not be construed to exclude all possible intermediate stages of differentiation. Immature dendritic cells are characterized as APC with a high capacity for antigen uptake and processing, which correlates with the high expression of Fc γ receptor and mannose receptor. The mature phenotype is typically

characterized by a lower expression of these markers, but a high expression of cell surface molecules responsible for T cell activation such as class I and class II MHC, adhesion molecules (*e.g.*, CD54 and CD11) and costimulatory molecules (*e.g.*, CD40, CD80, CD86 and 4-1BB).

- 5 APCs may generally be transfected with a polynucleotide encoding a breast tumor protein (or portion or other variant thereof) such that the breast tumor polypeptide, or an immunogenic portion thereof, is expressed on the cell surface. Such transfection may take place *ex vivo*, and a composition comprising such transfected cells may then be used for therapeutic purposes, as described herein. Alternatively, a gene delivery vehicle that
- 10 targets a dendritic or other antigen presenting cell may be administered to a patient, resulting in transfection that occurs *in vivo*. *In vivo* and *ex vivo* transfection of dendritic cells, for example, may generally be performed using any methods known in the art, such as those described in WO 97/24447, or the gene gun approach described by Mahvi *et al.*, *Immunology and cell Biology* 75:456-460, 1997. Antigen loading of dendritic cells may be
- 15 achieved by incubating dendritic cells or progenitor cells with the breast tumor polypeptide, DNA (naked or within a plasmid vector) or RNA; or with antigen-expressing recombinant bacterium or viruses (*e.g.*, vaccinia, fowlpox, adenovirus or lentivirus vectors). Prior to loading, the polypeptide may be covalently conjugated to an immunological partner that provides T cell help (*e.g.*, a carrier molecule). Alternatively, a
- 20 dendritic cell may be pulsed with a non-conjugated immunological partner, separately or in the presence of the polypeptide.

- Immunogenic compositions and pharmaceutical compositions may be presented in unit-dose or multi-dose containers, such as sealed ampoules or vials. Such containers are preferably hermetically sealed to preserve sterility of the formulation until
- 25 use. In general, formulations may be stored as suspensions, solutions or emulsions in oily or aqueous vehicles. Alternatively, an immunogenic composition or pharmaceutical composition may be stored in a freeze-dried condition requiring only the addition of a sterile liquid carrier immediately prior to use.

CANCER THERAPY

In further aspects of the present invention, the compositions described herein may be used for immunotherapy of cancer, such as breast cancer. Within such methods, pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions are typically administered to a patient. As used herein, a "patient" refers to any warm-blooded animal, preferably a human. A patient may or may not be afflicted with cancer. Accordingly, the above pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions may be used to prevent the development of a cancer or to treat a patient afflicted with a cancer. A cancer may be diagnosed using criteria generally accepted in the art, including the presence of a malignant tumor. Pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions may be administered either prior to or following surgical removal of primary tumors and/or treatment such as administration of radiotherapy or conventional chemotherapeutic drugs. Administration may be by any suitable method, including administration by intravenous, intraperitoneal, intramuscular, subcutaneous, intranasal, intradermal, anal, vaginal, topical and oral routes.

Within certain embodiments, immunotherapy may be active immunotherapy, in which treatment relies on the *in vivo* stimulation of the endogenous host immune system to react against tumors with the administration of immune response-modifying agents (such as polypeptides and polynucleotides as provided herein).

Within other embodiments, immunotherapy may be passive immunotherapy, in which treatment involves the delivery of agents with established tumor-immune reactivity (such as effector cells or antibodies) that can directly or indirectly mediate antitumor effects and does not necessarily depend on an intact host immune system. Examples of effector cells include T cells as discussed above, T lymphocytes (such as CD8⁺ cytotoxic T lymphocytes and CD4⁺ T-helper tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes), killer cells (such as Natural Killer cells and lymphokine-activated killer cells), B cells and antigen-presenting cells (such as dendritic cells and macrophages) expressing a polypeptide provided herein. T cell receptors and antibody receptors specific for the polypeptides recited herein may be cloned, expressed and transferred into other

vectors or effector cells for adoptive immunotherapy. The polypeptides provided herein may also be used to generate antibodies or anti-idiotypic antibodies (as described above and in U.S. Patent No. 4,918,164) for passive immunotherapy.

Effector cells may generally be obtained in sufficient quantities for adoptive immunotherapy by growth *in vitro*, as described herein. Culture conditions for expanding single antigen-specific effector cells to several billion in number with retention of antigen recognition *in vivo* are well known in the art. Such *in vitro* culture conditions typically use intermittent stimulation with antigen, often in the presence of cytokines (such as IL-2) and non-dividing feeder cells. As noted above, immunoreactive polypeptides as provided herein may be used to rapidly expand antigen-specific T cell cultures in order to generate a sufficient number of cells for immunotherapy. In particular, antigen-presenting cells, such as dendritic, macrophage, monocyte, fibroblast and/or B cells, may be pulsed with immunoreactive polypeptides or transfected with one or more polynucleotides using standard techniques well known in the art. For example, antigen-presenting cells can be transfected with a polynucleotide having a promoter appropriate for increasing expression in a recombinant virus or other expression system. Cultured effector cells for use in therapy must be able to grow and distribute widely, and to survive long term *in vivo*. Studies have shown that cultured effector cells can be induced to grow *in vivo* and to survive long term in substantial numbers by repeated stimulation with antigen supplemented with IL-2 (*see*, for example, Cheever *et al.*, *Immunological Reviews* 157:177, 1997).

Alternatively, a vector expressing a polypeptide recited herein may be introduced into antigen presenting cells taken from a patient and clonally propagated *ex vivo* for transplant back into the same patient. Transfected cells may be reintroduced into the patient using any means known in the art, preferably in sterile form by intravenous, intracavitary, intraperitoneal or intratumor administration.

Routes and frequency of administration of the therapeutic compositions described herein, as well as dosage, will vary from individual to individual, and may be readily established using standard techniques. In general, the pharmaceutical compositions

and immunogenic compositions may be administered by injection (*e.g.*, intracutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or subcutaneous), intranasally (*e.g.*, by aspiration) or orally. Preferably, between 1 and 10 doses may be administered over a 52 week period. Preferably, 6 doses are administered, at intervals of 1 month, and booster vaccinations may be given periodically thereafter. Alternate protocols may be appropriate for individual patients. A suitable dose is an amount of a compound that, when administered as described above, is capable of promoting an anti-tumor immune response, and is at least 10-50% above the basal (*i.e.*, untreated) level. Such response can be monitored by measuring the anti-tumor antibodies in a patient or by vaccine-dependent generation of cytolytic effector cells capable of killing the patient's tumor cells *in vitro*. Such immunogenic compositions should also be capable of causing an immune response that leads to an improved clinical outcome (*e.g.*, more frequent remissions, complete or partial or longer disease-free survival) in treated patients as compared to non-treated patients. In general, for pharmaceutical compositions and immunogenic compositions comprising one or more polypeptides, the amount of each polypeptide present in a dose ranges from about 25 µg to 5 mg per kg of host. Suitable dose sizes will vary with the size of the patient, but will typically range from about 0.1 mL to about 5 mL.

In general, an appropriate dosage and treatment regimen provides the active compound(s) in an amount sufficient to provide therapeutic and/or prophylactic benefit. Such a response can be monitored by establishing an improved clinical outcome (*e.g.*, more frequent remissions, complete or partial, or longer disease-free survival) in treated patients as compared to non-treated patients. Increases in preexisting immune responses to a breast tumor protein generally correlate with an improved clinical outcome. Such immune responses may generally be evaluated using standard proliferation, cytotoxicity or cytokine assays, which may be performed using samples obtained from a patient before and after treatment.

CANCER DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS

In general, a cancer may be detected in a patient based on the presence of one or more breast tumor proteins and/or polynucleotides encoding such proteins in a biological sample (for example, blood, sera, sputum urine and/or tumor biopsies) obtained from the patient. In other words, such proteins may be used as markers to indicate the presence or absence of a cancer such as breast cancer. In addition, such proteins may be useful for the detection of other cancers. The binding agents provided herein generally permit detection of the level of antigen that binds to the agent in the biological sample. Polynucleotide primers and probes may be used to detect the level of mRNA encoding a tumor protein, which is also indicative of the presence or absence of a cancer. In general, a breast tumor sequence should be present at a level that is at least three fold higher in tumor tissue than in normal tissue

There are a variety of assay formats known to those of ordinary skill in the art for using a binding agent to detect polypeptide markers in a sample. See, e.g., Harlow and Lane, *Antibodies: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, 1988. In general, the presence or absence of a cancer in a patient may be determined by (a) contacting a biological sample obtained from a patient with a binding agent; (b) detecting in the sample a level of polypeptide that binds to the binding agent; and (c) comparing the level of polypeptide with a predetermined cut-off value.

In a preferred embodiment, the assay involves the use of binding agent immobilized on a solid support to bind to and remove the polypeptide from the remainder of the sample. The bound polypeptide may then be detected using a detection reagent that contains a reporter group and specifically binds to the binding agent/polypeptide complex. Such detection reagents may comprise, for example, a binding agent that specifically binds to the polypeptide or an antibody or other agent that specifically binds to the binding agent, such as an anti-immunoglobulin, protein G, protein A or a lectin. Alternatively, a competitive assay may be utilized, in which a polypeptide is labeled with a reporter group and allowed to bind to the immobilized binding agent after incubation of the binding agent with the sample. The extent to which components of the sample inhibit the binding of the

labeled polypeptide to the binding agent is indicative of the reactivity of the sample with the immobilized binding agent. Suitable polypeptides for use within such assays include full length breast tumor proteins and portions thereof to which the binding agent binds, as described above.

5 The solid support may be any material known to those of ordinary skill in the art to which the tumor protein may be attached. For example, the solid support may be a test well in a microtiter plate or a nitrocellulose or other suitable membrane. Alternatively, the support may be a bead or disc, such as glass, fiberglass, latex or a plastic material such as polystyrene or polyvinylchloride. The support may also be a magnetic
10 particle or a fiber optic sensor, such as those disclosed, for example, in U.S. Patent No. 5,359,681. The binding agent may be immobilized on the solid support using a variety of techniques known to those of skill in the art, which are amply described in the patent and scientific literature. In the context of the present invention, the term "immobilization" refers to both noncovalent association, such as adsorption, and covalent attachment (which
15 may be a direct linkage between the agent and functional groups on the support or may be a linkage by way of a cross-linking agent). Immobilization by adsorption to a well in a microtiter plate or to a membrane is preferred. In such cases, adsorption may be achieved by contacting the binding agent, in a suitable buffer, with the solid support for a suitable amount of time. The contact time varies with temperature, but is typically between about 1
20 hour and about 1 day. In general, contacting a well of a plastic microtiter plate (such as polystyrene or polyvinylchloride) with an amount of binding agent ranging from about 10 ng to about 10 μ g, and preferably about 100 ng to about 1 μ g, is sufficient to immobilize an adequate amount of binding agent.

Covalent attachment of binding agent to a solid support may generally be
25 achieved by first reacting the support with a bifunctional reagent that will react with both the support and a functional group, such as a hydroxyl or amino group, on the binding agent. For example, the binding agent may be covalently attached to supports having an appropriate polymer coating using benzoquinone or by condensation of an aldehyde group

on the support with an amine and an active hydrogen on the binding partner (*see, e.g.*, Pierce Immunotechnology Catalog and Handbook, 1991, at A12-A13).

In certain embodiments, the assay is a two-antibody sandwich assay. This assay may be performed by first contacting an antibody that has been immobilized on a solid support, commonly the well of a microtiter plate, with the sample, such that polypeptides within the sample are allowed to bind to the immobilized antibody. Unbound sample is then removed from the immobilized polypeptide-antibody complexes and a detection reagent (preferably a second antibody capable of binding to a different site on the polypeptide) containing a reporter group is added. The amount of detection reagent that remains bound to the solid support is then determined using a method appropriate for the specific reporter group.

More specifically, once the antibody is immobilized on the support as described above, the remaining protein binding sites on the support are typically blocked. Any suitable blocking agent known to those of ordinary skill in the art, such as bovine serum albumin or Tween 20™ (Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO). The immobilized antibody is then incubated with the sample, and polypeptide is allowed to bind to the antibody. The sample may be diluted with a suitable diluent, such as phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) prior to incubation. In general, an appropriate contact time (*i.e.*, incubation time) is a period of time that is sufficient to detect the presence of polypeptide within a sample obtained from an individual with breast cancer. Preferably, the contact time is sufficient to achieve a level of binding that is at least about 95% of that achieved at equilibrium between bound and unbound polypeptide. Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the time necessary to achieve equilibrium may be readily determined by assaying the level of binding that occurs over a period of time. At room temperature, an incubation time of about 30 minutes is generally sufficient.

Unbound sample may then be removed by washing the solid support with an appropriate buffer, such as PBS containing 0.1% Tween 20™. The second antibody, which contains a reporter group, may then be added to the solid support. Preferred reporter groups include those groups recited above.

The detection reagent is then incubated with the immobilized antibody-polypeptide complex for an amount of time sufficient to detect the bound polypeptide. An appropriate amount of time may generally be determined by assaying the level of binding that occurs over a period of time. Unbound detection reagent is then removed and bound

5 detection reagent is detected using the reporter group. The method employed for detecting the reporter group depends upon the nature of the reporter group. For radioactive groups, scintillation counting or autoradiographic methods are generally appropriate. Spectroscopic methods may be used to detect dyes, luminescent groups and fluorescent groups. Biotin may be detected using avidin, coupled to a different reporter group

10 (commonly a radioactive or fluorescent group or an enzyme). Enzyme reporter groups may generally be detected by the addition of substrate (generally for a specific period of time), followed by spectroscopic or other analysis of the reaction products.

To determine the presence or absence of a cancer, such as breast cancer, the signal detected from the reporter group that remains bound to the solid support is generally

15 compared to a signal that corresponds to a predetermined cut-off value. In one preferred embodiment, the cut-off value for the detection of a cancer is the average mean signal obtained when the immobilized antibody is incubated with samples from patients without the cancer. In general, a sample generating a signal that is three standard deviations above the predetermined cut-off value is considered positive for the cancer. In an alternate

20 preferred embodiment, the cut-off value is determined using a Receiver Operator Curve, according to the method of Sackett *et al.*, *Clinical Epidemiology: A Basic Science for Clinical Medicine*, Little Brown and Co., 1985, p. 106-7. Briefly, in this embodiment, the cut-off value may be determined from a plot of pairs of true positive rates (*i.e.*, sensitivity) and false positive rates (100%-specificity) that correspond to each possible cut-off value

25 for the diagnostic test result. The cut-off value on the plot that is the closest to the upper left-hand corner (*i.e.*, the value that encloses the largest area) is the most accurate cut-off value, and a sample generating a signal that is higher than the cut-off value determined by this method may be considered positive. Alternatively, the cut-off value may be shifted to the left along the plot, to minimize the false positive rate, or to the right, to minimize the

false negative rate. In general, a sample generating a signal that is higher than the cut-off value determined by this method is considered positive for a cancer.

In a related embodiment, the assay is performed in a flow-through or strip test format, wherein the binding agent is immobilized on a membrane, such as nitrocellulose. In the flow-through test, polypeptides within the sample bind to the immobilized binding agent as the sample passes through the membrane. A second, labeled binding agent then binds to the binding agent-polypeptide complex as a solution containing the second binding agent flows through the membrane. The detection of bound second binding agent may then be performed as described above. In the strip test format, one end of the membrane to which binding agent is bound is immersed in a solution containing the sample. The sample migrates along the membrane through a region containing second binding agent and to the area of immobilized binding agent. Concentration of second binding agent at the area of immobilized antibody indicates the presence of a cancer. Typically, the concentration of second binding agent at that site generates a pattern, such as a line, that can be read visually. The absence of such a pattern indicates a negative result. In general, the amount of binding agent immobilized on the membrane is selected to generate a visually discernible pattern when the biological sample contains a level of polypeptide that would be sufficient to generate a positive signal in the two-antibody sandwich assay, in the format discussed above. Preferred binding agents for use in such assays are antibodies and antigen-binding fragments thereof. Preferably, the amount of antibody immobilized on the membrane ranges from about 25 ng to about 1 μ g, and more preferably from about 50 ng to about 500 ng. Such tests can typically be performed with a very small amount of biological sample.

Of course, numerous other assay protocols exist that are suitable for use with the tumor proteins or binding agents of the present invention. The above descriptions are intended to be exemplary only. For example, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that the above protocols may be readily modified to use breast tumor polypeptides to detect antibodies that bind to such polypeptides in a biological sample.

The detection of such breast tumor protein specific antibodies may correlate with the presence of a cancer.

A cancer may also, or alternatively, be detected based on the presence of T cells that specifically react with a breast tumor protein in a biological sample. Within certain methods, a biological sample comprising CD4⁺ and/or CD8⁺ T cells isolated from a patient is incubated with a breast tumor polypeptide, a polynucleotide encoding such a polypeptide and/or an APC that expresses at least an immunogenic portion of such a polypeptide, and the presence or absence of specific activation of the T cells is detected. Suitable biological samples include, but are not limited to, isolated T cells. For example, T cells may be isolated from a patient by routine techniques (such as by Ficoll/Hypaque density gradient centrifugation of peripheral blood lymphocytes). T cells may be incubated *in vitro* for 2-9 days (typically 4 days) at 37°C with polypeptide (*e.g.*, 5 - 25 µg/ml). It may be desirable to incubate another aliquot of a T cell sample in the absence of breast tumor polypeptide to serve as a control. For CD4⁺ T cells, activation is preferably detected by evaluating proliferation of the T cells. For CD8⁺ T cells, activation is preferably detected by evaluating cytolytic activity. A level of proliferation that is at least two fold greater and/or a level of cytolytic activity that is at least 20% greater than in disease-free patients indicates the presence of a cancer in the patient.

As noted above, a cancer may also, or alternatively, be detected based on the level of mRNA encoding a breast tumor protein in a biological sample. For example, at least two oligonucleotide primers may be employed in a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) based assay to amplify a portion of a breast tumor cDNA derived from a biological sample, wherein at least one of the oligonucleotide primers is specific for (*i.e.*, hybridizes to) a polynucleotide encoding the breast tumor protein. The amplified cDNA is then separated and detected using techniques well known in the art, such as gel electrophoresis. Similarly, oligonucleotide probes that specifically hybridize to a polynucleotide encoding a breast tumor protein may be used in a hybridization assay to detect the presence of polynucleotide encoding the tumor protein in a biological sample.

To permit hybridization under assay conditions, oligonucleotide primers and probes should comprise an oligonucleotide sequence that has at least about 60%, preferably at least about 75% and more preferably at least about 90%, identity to a portion of a polynucleotide encoding a breast tumor protein that is at least 10 nucleotides, and preferably at least 20 nucleotides, in length. Preferably, oligonucleotide primers and/or probes hybridize to a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide described herein under moderately stringent conditions, as defined above. Oligonucleotide primers and/or probes which may be usefully employed in the diagnostic methods described herein preferably are at least 10-40 nucleotides in length. In a preferred embodiment, the oligonucleotide primers comprise at least 10 contiguous nucleotides, more preferably at least 15 contiguous nucleotides, of a DNA molecule having a sequence recited in SEQ ID NO: 1, 3-86, 142-298, 301-303, 307, 313, 314, 316 and 317. Techniques for both PCR based assays and hybridization assays are well known in the art (*see*, for example, Mullis *et al.*, *Cold Spring Harbor Symp. Quant. Biol.*, 51:263, 1987; Erlich ed., *PCR Technology*, Stockton Press, NY, 1989).

One preferred assay employs RT-PCR, in which PCR is applied in conjunction with reverse transcription. Typically, RNA is extracted from a biological sample, such as biopsy tissue, and is reverse transcribed to produce cDNA molecules. PCR amplification using at least one specific primer generates a cDNA molecule, which may be separated and visualized using, for example, gel electrophoresis. Amplification may be performed on biological samples taken from a test patient and from an individual who is not afflicted with a cancer. The amplification reaction may be performed on several dilutions of cDNA spanning two orders of magnitude. A two-fold or greater increase in expression in several dilutions of the test patient sample as compared to the same dilutions of the non-cancerous sample is typically considered positive.

In another embodiment, the compositions described herein may be used as markers for the progression of cancer. In this embodiment, assays as described above for the diagnosis of a cancer may be performed over time, and the change in the level of reactive polypeptide(s) or polynucleotide(s) evaluated. For example, the assays may be

performed every 24-72 hours for a period of 6 months to 1 year, and thereafter performed as needed. In general, a cancer is progressing in those patients in whom the level of polypeptide or polynucleotide detected increases over time. In contrast, the cancer is not progressing when the level of reactive polypeptide or polynucleotide either remains
5 constant or decreases with time.

Certain *in vivo* diagnostic assays may be performed directly on a tumor. One such assay involves contacting tumor cells with a binding agent. The bound binding agent may then be detected directly or indirectly via a reporter group. Such binding agents may also be used in histological applications. Alternatively, polynucleotide probes may be
10 used within such applications.

As noted above, to improve sensitivity, multiple breast tumor protein markers may be assayed within a given sample. It will be apparent that binding agents specific for different proteins provided herein may be combined within a single assay. Further, multiple primers or probes may be used concurrently. The selection of tumor
15 protein markers may be based on routine experiments to determine combinations that results in optimal sensitivity. In addition, or alternatively, assays for tumor proteins provided herein may be combined with assays for other known tumor antigens.

DIAGNOSTIC KITS

The present invention further provides kits for use within any of the above
20 diagnostic methods. Such kits typically comprise two or more components necessary for performing a diagnostic assay. Components may be compounds, reagents, containers and/or equipment. For example, one container within a kit may contain a monoclonal antibody or fragment thereof that specifically binds to a breast tumor protein. Such antibodies or fragments may be provided attached to a support material, as described
25 above. One or more additional containers may enclose elements, such as reagents or buffers, to be used in the assay. Such kits may also, or alternatively, contain a detection reagent as described above that contains a reporter group suitable for direct or indirect detection of antibody binding.

5

of limitation.

EXAMPLE 1

PREPARATION OF BREAST TUMOR-SPECIFIC CDNAS USING
DIFFERENTIAL DISPLAY RT-PCR

5 This Example illustrates the preparation of cDNA molecules encoding breast tumor-specific polypeptides using a differential display screen.

A. Preparation of B18Ag1 cDNA and Characterization of mRNA Expression

Tissue samples were prepared from breast tumor and normal tissue of a patient with breast cancer that was confirmed by pathology after removal from the patient.

10 Normal RNA and tumor RNA was extracted from the samples and mRNA was isolated and converted into cDNA using a (dT)₁₂AG (SEQ ID NO:130) anchored 3' primer. Differential display PCR was then executed using a randomly chosen primer (CTTCAACCTC) (SEQ ID NO:103). Amplification conditions were standard buffer containing 1.5 mM MgCl₂, 20 pmol of primer, 500 pmol dNTP, and 1 unit of *Taq* DNA

15 polymerase (Perkin-Elmer, Branchburg, NJ). Forty cycles of amplification were performed using 94°C denaturation for 30 seconds, 42°C annealing for 1 minute, and 72°C extension for 30 seconds. An RNA fingerprint containing 76 amplified products was obtained. Although the RNA fingerprint of breast tumor tissue was over 98% identical to that of the normal breast tissue, a band was repeatedly observed to be specific to the RNA fingerprint

20 pattern of the tumor. This band was cut out of a silver stained gel, subcloned into the T-vector (Novagen, Madison, WI) and sequenced.

The sequence of the cDNA, referred to as B18Ag1, is provided in SEQ ID NO:1. A database search of GENBANK and EMBL revealed that the B18Ag1 fragment initially cloned is 77% identical to the endogenous human retroviral element S71, which is

25 a truncated retroviral element homologous to the Simian Sarcoma Virus (SSV). S71 contains an incomplete *gag* gene, a portion of the *pol* gene and an LTR-like structure at the 3' terminus (see Werner et al., *Virology* 174:225-238 (1990)). B18Ag1 is also 64% identical to SSV in the region corresponding to the P30 (*gag*) locus. B18Ag1 contains

three separate and incomplete reading frames covering a region which shares considerable homology to a wide variety of gag proteins of retroviruses which infect mammals. In addition, the homology to S71 is not just within the *gag* gene, but spans several kb of sequence including an LTR.

- 5 B18Ag1-specific PCR primers were synthesized using computer analysis guidelines. RT-PCR amplification (94°C, 30 seconds; 60°C → 42°C, 30 seconds; 72°C, 30 seconds for 40 cycles) confirmed that B18Ag1 represents an actual mRNA sequence present at relatively high levels in the patient's breast tumor tissue. The primers used in amplification were B18Ag1-1 (CTG CCT GAG CCA CAA ATG) (SEQ ID NO:128) and
- 10 B18Ag1-4 (CCG GAG GAG GAA GCT AGA GGA ATA) (SEQ ID NO:129) at a 3.5 mM magnesium concentration and a pH of 8.5, and B18Ag1-2 (ATG GCT ATT TTC GGG GCC TGA CA) (SEQ ID NO:126) and B18Ag1-3 (CCG GTA TCT CCT CGT GGG TAT T) (SEQ ID NO:127) at 2 mM magnesium at pH 9.5. The same experiments showed exceedingly low to nonexistent levels of expression in this patient's normal breast tissue
- 15 (*see* Figure 1). RT-PCR experiments were then used to show that B18Ag1 mRNA is present in nine other breast tumor samples (from Brazilian and American patients) but absent in, or at exceedingly low levels in, the normal breast tissue corresponding to each cancer patient. RT-PCR analysis has also shown that the B18Ag1 transcript is not present in various normal tissues (including lymph node, myocardium and liver) and present at
- 20 relatively low levels in PBMC and lung tissue. The presence of B18Ag1 mRNA in breast tumor samples, and its absence from normal breast tissue, has been confirmed by Northern blot analysis, as shown in Figure 2.

- The differential expression of B18Ag1 in breast tumor tissue was also confirmed by RNase protection assays. Figure 3 shows the level of B18Ag1 mRNA in
- 25 various tissue types as determined in four different RNase protection assays. Lanes 1-12 represent various normal breast tissue samples, lanes 13-25 represent various breast tumor samples; lanes 26-27 represent normal prostate samples; lanes 28-29 represent prostate tumor samples; lanes 30-32 represent colon tumor samples; lane 33 represents normal aorta; lane 34 represents normal small intestine; lane 35 represents normal skin, lane 36

represents normal lymph node; lane 37 represents normal ovary; lane 38 represents normal liver; lane 39 represents normal skeletal muscle; lane 40 represents a first normal stomach sample, lane 41 represents a second normal stomach sample; lane 42 represents a normal lung; lane 43 represents normal kidney; and lane 44 represents normal pancreas.

- 5 Interexperimental comparison was facilitated by including a positive control RNA of known β -actin message abundance in each assay and normalizing the results of the different assays with respect to this positive control.

RT-PCR and Southern Blot analysis has shown the B18Ag1 locus to be present in human genomic DNA as a single copy endogenous retroviral element. A
 10 genomic clone of approximately 12-18 kb was isolated using the initial B18Ag1 sequence as a probe. Four additional subclones were also isolated by XbaI digestion. Additional retroviral sequences obtained from the ends of the XbaI digests of these clones (located as shown in Figure 4) are shown as SEQ ID NO:3 - SEQ ID NO:10, where SEQ ID NO:3 shows the location of the sequence labeled 10 in Figure 4, SEQ ID NO:4 shows the
 15 location of the sequence labeled 11-29, SEQ ID NO:5 shows the location of the sequence labeled 3, SEQ ID NO:6 shows the location of the sequence labeled 6, SEQ ID NO:7 shows the location of the sequence labeled 12, SEQ ID NO:8 shows the location of the sequence labeled 13, SEQ ID NO:9 shows the location of the sequence labeled 14 and SEQ ID NO:10 shows the location of the sequence labeled 11-22.

20 Subsequent studies demonstrated that the 12-18 kb genomic clone contains a retroviral element of about 7.75 kb, as shown in Figures 5A and 5B. The sequence of this retroviral element is shown in SEQ ID NO:141. The numbered line at the top of Figure 5A represents the sense strand sequence of the retroviral genomic clone. The box below this line shows the position of selected restriction sites. The arrows depict the different
 25 overlapping clones used to sequence the retroviral element. The direction of the arrow shows whether the single-pass subclone sequence corresponded to the sense or anti-sense strand. Figure 5B is a schematic diagram of the retroviral element containing B18Ag1 depicting the organization of viral genes within the element. The open boxes correspond to predicted reading frames, starting with a methionine, found throughout the element. Each

of the six likely reading frames is shown, as indicated to the left of the boxes, with frames 1-3 corresponding to those found on the sense strand.

Using the cDNA of SEQ ID NO:1 as a probe, a longer cDNA was obtained (SEQ ID NO:227) which contains minor nucleotide differences (less than 1%) compared to the genomic sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:141.

B. Preparation of cDNA Molecules Encoding Other Breast Tumor-Specific Polypeptides

Normal RNA and tumor RNA was prepared and mRNA was isolated and converted into cDNA using a (dT)₁₂AG anchored 3' primer, as described above. Differential display PCR was then executed using the randomly chosen primers of SEQ ID NOs:87-125. Amplification conditions were as noted above, and bands observed to be specific to the RNA fingerprint pattern of the tumor were cut out of a silver stained gel, subcloned into either the T-vector (Novagen, Madison, WI) or the pCRII vector (Invitrogen, San Diego, CA) and sequenced. The sequences are provided in SEQ ID NO:11 - SEQ ID NO:86. Of the 79 sequences isolated, 67 were found to be novel (SEQ ID NOs:11-26 and 28-77) (*see also* Figures 6-20).

An extended DNA sequence (SEQ ID NO:290) for the antigen B15Ag1 (originally identified partial sequence provided in SEQ ID NO:27) was obtained in further studies. Comparison of the sequence of SEQ ID NO:290 with those in the gene bank as described above, revealed homology to the known human β -A activin gene. Further studies led to the isolation of the full-length cDNA sequence for the antigen B21GT2 (also referred to as B311D; originally identified partial cDNA sequence provided in SEQ ID NOs:56). The full-length sequence is provided in SEQ ID NO:307, with the corresponding amino acid sequence being provided in SEQ ID NO:308. Further studies led to the isolation of a splice variant of B311D. The B311D clone of SEQ ID NO:316 was sequenced and a XhoI/NotI fragment from this clone was gel purified and 32P-cDTP labeled by random priming for use as a probe for further screening to obtain additional B311D gene sequence. Two fractions of a human breast tumor cDNA bacterial library were screened using standard techniques. One of the clones isolated in this manner yielded

additional sequence which includes a poly A+ tail. The determined cDNA sequence of this clone (referred to as B311D_BT1_1A) is provided in SEQ ID NO:317. The sequences of SEQ ID NOs:316 and 317 were found to share identity over a 464 bp region, with the sequences diverging near the poly A+ sequence of SEQ ID NO:317.

- 5 Subsequent studies identified an additional 146 sequences (SEQ ID NOs:142-289), of which 115 appeared to be novel (SEQ ID NOs:142, 143, 146-152, 154-166, 168-176, 178-192, 194-198, 200-204, 206, 207, 209-214, 216, 218, 219, 221-240, 243-245, 247, 250, 251, 253, 255, 257-266, 268, 269, 271-273, 275, 276, 278, 280, 281, 284, 288 and 291). To the best of the inventors' knowledge none of the previously
- 10 identified sequences have heretofore been shown to be expressed at a greater level in human breast tumor tissue than in normal breast tissue.

- In further studies, several different splice forms of the antigen B11Ag1 (also referred to as B305D) were isolated, with each of the various splice forms containing slightly different versions of the B11Ag1 coding frame. Splice junction sequences define
- 15 individual exons which, in various patterns and arrangements, make up the various splice forms. Primers were designed to examine the expression pattern of each of the exons using RT-PCR as described below. Each exon was found to show the same expression pattern as the original B11Ag1 clone, with expression being breast tumor-, normal prostate- and normal testis-specific. The determined cDNA sequences for the isolated protein coding
- 20 exons are provided in SEQ ID NOs:292-298, respectively. The predicted amino acid sequences corresponding to the sequences of SEQ ID NOs:292 and 298 are provided in SEQ ID NOs:299 and 300. Additional studies using rapid amplification of cDNA ends (RACE), a 5' specific primer to one of the splice forms of B11Ag1 provided above and a breast adenocarcinoma, led to the isolation of three additional, related, splice forms
- 25 referred to as isoforms B11C-15, B11C-8 and B11C-9,16. The determined cDNA sequences for these isoforms are provided in SEQ ID NO: 301-303, with the corresponding predicted amino acid sequences being provided in SEQ ID NOs:304-306.

In subsequent studies on B305D isoform A (cDNA sequence provided in SEQ ID NO:292), the cDNA sequence (provided in SEQ ID NO:313) was found to contain

an additional guanine residue at position 884, leading to a frameshift in the open reading frame. The determined DNA sequence of this ORF is provided in SEQ ID NO:314. This frameshift generates a protein sequence (provided in SEQ ID NO:315) of 293 amino acids that contains the C-terminal domain common to the other isoforms of B305D but that
5 differs in the N-terminal region.

EXAMPLE 2

PREPARATION OF B18Ag1 DNA FROM HUMAN GENOMIC DNA

10 This Example illustrates the preparation of B18Ag1 DNA by amplification from human genomic DNA.

B18Ag1 DNA may be prepared from 250 ng human genomic DNA using 20 pmol of B18Ag1 specific primers, 500 pmol dNTPS and 1 unit of *Taq* DNA polymerase (Perkin Elmer, Branchburg, NJ) using the following amplification parameters: 94°C for 30
15 seconds denaturing, 30 seconds 60°C to 42°C touchdown annealing in 2°C increments every two cycles and 72°C extension for 30 seconds. The last increment (a 42°C annealing temperature) should cycle 25 times. Primers were selected using computer analysis. Primers synthesized were B18Ag1-1, B18Ag1-2, B18Ag1-3, and B18Ag1-4. Primer pairs that may be used are 1+3, 1+4, 2+3, and 2+4.

20 Following gel electrophoresis, the band corresponding to B18Ag1 DNA may be excised and cloned into a suitable vector.

EXAMPLE 3

PREPARATION OF B18Ag1 DNA FROM BREAST TUMOR CDNA

25

This Example illustrates the preparation of B18Ag1 DNA by amplification from human breast tumor cDNA.

First strand cDNA is synthesized from RNA prepared from human breast tumor tissue in a reaction mixture containing 500 ng poly A+ RNA, 200 pmol of the primer

(T)₁₂AG (*i.e.*, TTT TTT TTT TTT AG) (SEQ ID NO:130), 1X first strand reverse transcriptase buffer, 6.7 mM DTT, 500 mmol dNTPs, and 1 unit AMV or MMLV reverse transcriptase (from any supplier, such as Gibco-BRL (Grand Island, NY)) in a final volume of 30 μ l. After first strand synthesis, the cDNA is diluted approximately 25 fold and 1 μ l is used for amplification as described in Example 2. While some primer pairs can result in a heterogeneous population of transcripts, the primers B18Ag1-2 (5'ATG GCT ATT TTC GGG GGC TGA CA) (SEQ ID NO:126) and B18Ag1-3 (5'CCG GTA TCT CCT CGT GGG TAT T) (SEQ ID NO:127) yield a single 151 bp amplification product.

EXAMPLE 4

IDENTIFICATION OF B-CELL AND T-CELL EPITOPES OF B18Ag1

This Example illustrates the identification of B18Ag1 epitopes.

The B18Ag1 sequence can be screened using a variety of computer algorithms. To determine B-cell epitopes, the sequence can be screened for hydrophobicity and hydrophilicity values using the method of Hopp, *Prog. Clin. Biol. Res.* 172B:367-77 (1985) or, alternatively, Cease et al., *J. Exp. Med.* 164:1779-84 (1986) or Spouge et al., *J. Immunol.* 138:204-12 (1987). Additional Class II MHC (antibody or B-cell) epitopes can be predicted using programs such as AMPHI (*e.g.*, Margalit et al., *J. Immunol.* 138:2213 (1987)) or the methods of Rothbard and Taylor (*e.g.*, *EMBO J.* 7:93 (1988)).

Once peptides (15-20 amino acids long) are identified using these techniques, individual peptides can be synthesized using automated peptide synthesis equipment (available from manufacturers such as Perkin Elmer/Applied Biosystems Division, Foster City, CA) and techniques such as Merrifield synthesis. Following synthesis, the peptides can be used to screen sera harvested from either normal or breast cancer patients to determine whether patients with breast cancer possess antibodies reactive with the peptides. Presence of such antibodies in breast cancer patient would confirm the immunogenicity of the specific B-cell epitope in question. The peptides can also be tested for their ability to generate a serologic or humoral immune in animals (mice, rats, rabbits,

chimps etc.) following immunization *in vivo*. Generation of a peptide-specific antiserum following such immunization further confirms the immunogenicity of the specific B-cell epitope in question.

To identify T-cell epitopes, the B18Ag1 sequence can be screened using
 5 different computer algorithms which are useful in identifying 8-10 amino acid motifs within the B18Ag1 sequence which are capable of binding to HLA Class I MHC molecules. (see, e.g., Rammensee et al., *Immunogenetics* 41:178-228 (1995)). Following synthesis such peptides can be tested for their ability to bind to class I MHC using standard binding assays (e.g., Sette et al., *J. Immunol.* 153:5586-92 (1994)) and more importantly
 10 can be tested for their ability to generate antigen reactive cytotoxic T-cells following *in vitro* stimulation of patient or normal peripheral mononuclear cells using, for example, the methods of Bakker et al., *Cancer Res.* 55:5330-34 (1995); Visseren et al., *J. Immunol.* 154:3991-98 (1995); Kawakami et al., *J. Immunol.* 154:3961-68 (1995); and Kast et al., *J. Immunol.* 152:3904-12 (1994). Successful *in vitro* generation of T-cells capable of killing
 15 autologous (bearing the same Class I MHC molecules) tumor cells following *in vitro* peptide stimulation further confirms the immunogenicity of the B18Ag1 antigen. Furthermore, such peptides may be used to generate murine peptide and B18Ag1 reactive cytotoxic T-cells following *in vivo* immunization in mice rendered transgenic for expression of a particular human MHC Class I haplotype (Vitiello et al., *J. Exp. Med.*
 20 173:1007-15 (1991).

A representative list of predicted B18Ag1 B-cell and T-cell epitopes, broken down according to predicted HLA Class I MHC binding antigen, is shown below:

Predicted Th Motifs (B-cell epitopes) (SEQ ID NOS.: 131-133)

25 SSGGRTFDDFHRYLLVGI
 QGAAQKPINLSKXIEVVQGHDE
 SPGVFLEHLQEAYRIYTPFDLSA

Predicted HLA A2.1 Motifs (T-cell epitopes) (SEQ ID NOS.: 134-140)

YLLVGIQGA

GAAQKPINL

NLSKXIEVV

5 EVVQGHDES

HLQEAYRIY

NLAFVAQAA

FVAQAAPDS

10 EXAMPLE 5

IDENTIFICATION OF T-CELL EPITOPES OF B11Ag1

This Example illustrates the identification of B11Ag1 (also referred to as B305D) epitopes. Four peptides, referred to as B11-8, B11-1, B11-5 and B11-12 (SEQ ID NOs:309-312, respectfully) were derived from the B11Ag1 gene.

15 Human CD8 T cells were primed *in vitro* to the peptide B11-8 using dendritic cells according to the protocol of Van Tsai et al. (*Critical Reviews in Immunology* 18:65-75, 1998). The resulting CD8 T cell cultures were tested for their ability to recognize the B11-8 peptide or a negative control peptide, presented by the B-LCL line, JY. Briefly, T cells were incubated with autologous monocytes in the presence of 10 ug/ml peptide, 10 ng/ml IL-7 and 10 ug/ml IL-2, and assayed for their ability to specifically lyse target cells in a standard 51-Cr release assay. As shown in Fig. 22, the bulk culture line demonstrated strong recognition of the B11-8 peptide with weaker recognition of the peptide B11-1.

25 A clone from this CTL line was isolated following rapid expansion using the monoclonal antibody OKT3 and human IL-2. As shown in Fig. 23, this clone (referred to as A1), in addition to being able to recognize specific peptide, recognized JY LCL transduced with the B11Ag1 gene. This data demonstrates that B11-8 is a naturally processed epitope of the B11Ag1 gene. In addition these T cells were further found to recognize and lyse, in an HLA-A2 restricted manner, an established tumor cell line

5 These data clearly demonstrate that these human T cells recognize not only B11-specific peptides but also transduced cells, as well as naturally expressing tumor lines.

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EXAMPLE 6
CHARACTERIZATION OF BREAST TUMOR GENES DISCOVERED BY
DIFFERENTIAL DISPLAY PCR

5 The specificity and sensitivity of the breast tumor genes discovered by differential display PCR were determined using RT-PCR. This procedure enabled the rapid evaluation of breast tumor gene mRNA expression semiquantitatively without using large amounts of RNA. Using gene specific primers, mRNA expression levels in a variety of tissues were examined, including 8 breast tumors, 5 normal breasts, 2 prostate tumors, 2
10 colon tumors, 1 lung tumor, and 14 other normal adult human tissues, including normal prostate, colon, kidney, liver, lung, ovary, pancreas, skeletal muscle, skin, stomach and testes.

 To ensure the semiquantitative nature of the RT-PCR, β -actin was used as internal control for each of the tissues examined. Serial dilutions of the first strand cDNAs
15 were prepared and RT-PCR assays performed using β -actin specific primers. A dilution was then selected that enabled the linear range amplification of β -actin template, and which was sensitive enough to reflect the difference in the initial copy number. Using this condition, the β -actin levels were determined for each reverse transcription reaction from each tissue. DNA contamination was minimized by DNase treatment and by assuring a
20 negative result when using first strand cDNA that was prepared without adding reverse transcriptase.

 Using gene specific primers, the mRNA expression levels were determined in a variety of tissues. To date, 38 genes have been successfully examined by RT-PCR, five of which exhibit good specificity and sensitivity for breast tumors (B15AG-1, B31GA1b, B38GA2a, B11A1a and B18AG1a). Figures 21A and 21B depict the results for
25 three of these genes: B15AG-1 (SEQ ID NO:27), B31GA1b (SEQ ID NO:148) and B38GA2a (SEQ ID NO:157). Table I summarizes the expression level of all the genes tested in normal breast tissue and breast tumors, and also in other tissues.

TABLE I
Percentage of Breast Cancer Antigens that are Expressed in Various Tissues

5	Breast Tissues	Over-expressed in Breast Tumors	84%
		Equally Expressed in Normals and Tumor	16%
10	Other Tissues	Over-expressed in Breast Tumors but not in any Normal Tissues	9%
		Over-expressed in Breast Tumors but Expressed in Some Normal Tissues	30%
15		Over-expressed in Breast Tumors but Equally Expressed in All Other Tissues	61%

EXAMPLE 7

PREPARATION AND CHARACTERIZATION OF ANTIBODIES AGAINST BREAST TUMOR POLYPEPTIDES

Polyclonal antibodies against the breast tumor antigen B305D were prepared as follows.

The breast tumor antigen expressed in an *E. coli* recombinant expression system was grown overnight in LB broth with the appropriate antibiotics at 37 °C in a shaking incubator. The next morning, 10 ml of the overnight culture was added to 500 ml to 2x YT plus appropriate antibiotics in a 2L-baffled Erlenmeyer flask. When the Optical Density (at 560 nm) of the culture reached 0.4-0.6, the cells were induced with IPTG (1 mM). Four hours after induction with IPTG, the cells were harvested by centrifugation. The cells were then washed with phosphate buffered saline and centrifuged again. The supernatant was discarded and the cells were either frozen for future use or immediately processed. Twenty ml of lysis buffer was added to the cell pellets and vortexed. To break open the *E. coli* cells, this mixture was then run through the French Press at a pressure of

16,000 psi. The cells were then centrifuged again and the supernatant and pellet were checked by SDS-PAGE for the partitioning of the recombinant protein. For proteins that localized to the cell pellet, the pellet was resuspended in 10 mM Tris pH 8.0, 1% CHAPS and the inclusion body pellet was washed and centrifuged again. This procedure was repeated twice more. The washed inclusion body pellet was solubilized with either 8 M urea or 6 M guanidine HCl containing 10 mM Tris pH 8.0 plus 10 mM imidazole. The solubilized protein was added to 5 ml of nickel-chelate resin (Qiagen) and incubated for 45 min to 1 hour at room temperature with continuous agitation. After incubation, the resin and protein mixture were poured through a disposable column and the flow through was collected. The column was then washed with 10-20 column volumes of the solubilization buffer. The antigen was then eluted from the column using 8M urea, 10 mM Tris pH 8.0 and 300 mM imidazole and collected in 3 ml fractions. A SDS-PAGE gel was run to determine which fractions to pool for further purification.

As a final purification step, a strong anion exchange resin such as HiPrepQ (Biorad) was equilibrated with the appropriate buffer and the pooled fractions from above were loaded onto the column. Antigen was eluted off the column with a increasing salt gradient. Fractions were collected as the column was run and another SDS-PAGE gel was run to determine which fractions from the column to pool. The pooled fractions were dialyzed against 10 mM Tris pH 8.0. The protein was then vialled after filtration through a 0.22 micron filter and the antigens were frozen until needed for immunization.

Four hundred micrograms of B305D antigen was combined with 100 micrograms of muramyl dipeptide (MDP). Every four weeks rabbits were boosted with 100 micrograms mixed with an equal volume of Incomplete Freund's Adjuvant (IFA). Seven days following each boost, the animal was bled. Sera was generated by incubating the blood at 4 °C for 12-24 hours followed by centrifugation.

Ninety-six well plates were coated with B305D antigen by incubating with 50 microliters (typically 1 microgram) of recombinant protein at 4 °C for 20 hours. 250 microliters of BSA blocking buffer was added to the wells and incubated at room temperature for 2 hours. Plates were washed 6 times with PBS/0.01% Tween. Rabbit sera

was diluted in PBS. Fifty microliters of diluted sera was added to each well and incubated at room temperature for 30 min. Plates were washed as described above before 50 microliters of goat anti-rabbit horse radish peroxidase (HRP) at a 1:10000 dilution was added and incubated at room temperature for 30 min. Plates were again washed as described above and 100 microliters of TMB microwell peroxidase substrate was added to each well. Following a 15 min incubation in the dark at room temperature, the colorimetric reaction was stopped with 100 microliters of 1N H₂SO₄ and read immediately at 450 nm. The polyclonal antibodies showed immunoreactivity to B305D.

Immunohistochemical (IHC) analysis of B305D expression in breast cancer and normal breast specimens was performed as follows. Paraffin-embedded formal fixed tissue was sliced into 8 micron sections. Steam heat induced epitope retrieval (SHIER) in 0.1 M sodium citrate buffer (pH 6.0) was used for optimal staining conditions. Sections were incubated with 10% serum/PBS for 5 minutes. Primary antibody was added to each section for 25 min at indicated concentrations followed by a 25 min incubation with either an anti-rabbit or anti-mouse biotinylated antibody. Endogenous peroxidase activity was blocked by three 1.5 min incubations with hydrogen peroxide. The avidin biotin complex/horseradish peroxidase (ABC/HRP) systems was used along with DAB chromagen to visualize antigen expression. Slides were counterstained with hematoxylin. B305D expression was detected in both breast tumor and normal breast tissue. However, the intensity of staining was much less in normal samples than in tumor samples and surface expression of B305D was observed only in breast tumor tissues.

A summary of real-time PCR and immunohistochemical analysis of B305D expression in an extensive panel of normal tissues is presented in Table II below. These results demonstrate minimal expression of B305D in testis, inconclusive results in gall bladder, and no detection in all other tissues tested.

TABLE II

mRNA	IHC staining	Tissue type	Summary
Moderately positive	Positive	Testis	Nuclear staining of small minority of spermatids; spermatozoa negative; seminoma negative
Negative	Negative	Thymus	No expression
N/A	Negative	Artery	No expression
Negative	Negative	Skeletal muscle	No expression
Negative	Positive (weak staining)	Small bowel	No expression
Negative	Positive (weak staining)	Ovary	No expression
Negative		Pituitary	No expression
Negative	Positive (weak staining)	Stomach	No expression
Negative	Negative	Spinal cord	No expression
Negative	Negative	Spleen	No expression
Negative	Negative	Ureter	No expression
N/A	Negative	Gall bladder	Inconclusive
N/A	Negative	Placenta	No expression
Negative	Negative	Thyroid	No expression
Negative	Negative	Heart	No expression
Negative	Negative	Kidney	No expression
Negative	Negative	Liver	No expression
Negative	Negative	Brain-cerebellum	No expression
Negative	Negative	Colon	No expression
Negative	Negative	Skin	No expression
Negative	Negative	Bone marrow	No expression
N/A	Negative	Parathyroid	No expression
Negative	Negative	Lung	No expression
Negative	Negative	Esophagus	No expression
Negative	Positive (weak staining)	Uterus	No expression
Negative	Negative	Adrenal	No expression
Negative	Negative	Pancreas	No expression
N/A	Negative	Lymph node	No expression
Negative	Negative	Brain-cortex	No expression
N/A	Negative	Fallopian tube	No expression
Negative	Positive (weak staining)	Bladder	No expression
Negative	N/A	Bone	No expression
Negative	N/A	Salivary gland	No expression
Negative	N/A	Activated PBMC	No expression
Negative	N/A	Resting PBMC	No expression
Negative	N/A	Trachea	No expression
Negative	N/A	Vena cava	No expression

Negative	N/A	Retina	No expression
Negative	N/A	Cartilage	No expression

EXAMPLE 8

PROTEIN EXPRESSION OF BREAST TUMOR ANTIGENS

5 This example describes the expression and purification of the breast tumor antigen B305D in *E. coli* and in mammalian cells.

Expression of B305D isoform C-15 (SEQ ID NO:301; translated to 384 amino acids) in *E. coli* was achieved by cloning the open reading frame of B305D isoform C-15 downstream of the first 30 amino acids of the *M. tuberculosis* antigen Ra12 (SEQ ID NO:318) in pET17b. First, the internal EcoRI site in the B305D ORF was mutated without changing the protein sequence so that the gene could be cloned at the EcoRI site with Ra12. The PCR primers used for site-directed mutagenesis are shown in SEQ ID NO:319 (referred to as AW012) and SEQ ID NO:320 (referred to as AW013). The ORF of EcoRI site-modified B305D was then amplified by PCR using the primers AW014 (SEQ ID NO:321) and AW015 (SEQ ID NO:322). The PCR product was digested with EcoRI and ligated to the Ra12/pET17b vector at the EcoRI site. The sequence of the resulting fusion construct (referred to as Ra12mB11C) was confirmed by DNA sequencing. The determined cDNA sequence for the fusion construct is provided in SEQ ID NO:323, with the amino acid sequence being provided in SEQ ID NO:324.

20 The fusion construct was transformed into BL21(DE3)CodonPlus-RIL *E. coli* (Stratagene) and grown overnight in LB broth with kanamycin. The resulting culture was induced with IPTG. Protein was transferred to PVDF membrane and blocked with 5% non-fat milk (in PBS-Tween buffer), washed three times and incubated with mouse anti-His tag antibody (Clontech) for 1 hour. The membrane was washed 3 times and probed with HRP-Protein A (Zymed) for 30 min. Finally, the membrane was washed 3 times and developed with ECL (Amersham). Expression was detected by Western blot.

For recombinant expression in mammalian cells, B305D isoform C-15 (SEQ ID NO:301; translated to 384 amino acids) was subcloned into the mammalian expression vectors pCEP4 and pcDNA3.1 (Invitrogen). These constructs were transfected into HEK293 cells (ATCC) using Fugene 6 reagent (Roche). Briefly, the HEK cells were
 5 plated at a density of 100,000 cells/ml in DMEM (Gibco) containing 10% FBS (Hyclone) and grown overnight. The following day, 2 ul of Fugene 6 was added to 100 ul of DMEM containing no FBS and incubated for 15 minutes at room temperature. The Fugene 6/DMEM mixture was added to 1 ug of B305D/pCEP4 or B305D/pcDNA plasmid DNA and incubated for 15 minutes at room temperature. The Fugene/DNA mix was then added
 10 to the HEK293 cells and incubated for 48-72 hours at 37 °C with 7% CO₂. Cells were rinsed with PBS, the collected and pelleted by centrifugation.

For Western blot analysis, whole cell lysates were generated by incubating the cells in Triton-X100 containing lysis buffer for 30 minutes on ice. Lysates were then cleared by centrifugation at 10,000 rpm for 5 minutes at 4 °C. Samples were diluted with
 15 SDS_PAGE loading buffer containing beta-mercaptoethanol, and boiled for 10 minutes prior to loading the SDS_PAGE gel. Proteins were transferred to nitrocellulose and probed using Protein A purified anti-B305D rabbit polyclonal sera (prepared as described above) at a concentration of 1 ug/ml. The blot was revealed with a goat anti-rabbit Ig coupled to HRP followed by incubation in ECL substrate. Expression of B305D was detected in the
 20 the HEK293 lysates transfected with B305D, but not in control HEK293 cells transfected with vector alone.

For FACS analysis, cells were washed further with ice cold staining buffer and then incubated with a 1:100 dilution of a goat anti-rabbit Ig (H+L)-FITC reagent (Southern Biotechnology) for 30 minutes on ice. Following 3 washes, the cells were
 25 resuspended in staining buffer containing Propidium Iodide (PI), a vital stain that allows for identification of permeable cells, and then analyzed by FACS. The FACS analysis showed surface expression of B305D protein.

From the foregoing, it will be appreciated that, although specific embodiments of the invention have been described herein for the purpose of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from the spirit and scope of the invention.

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